Date A Live Volume 9

source : http://www.baka-tsuki.org/project/index.php?title=Date_A_Live:Volume_9

These are novel illustrations that were included in **Volume 9 - Natsumi Change**

Change NATSUMI

SpiritNo.7
AstralDress-WitchType　Weapon-BroomType[Haniel]

A LIVE アライブ

DATE デート

七罪チェンジ

橘公司
The author
Koushi Tachibana

09

ファンタジア文庫

SpiritNo.10
Uniform－RANDOSERU
Weapon－ThroneType [Sandalphon]

Blu-ray付き
限定版

デート・ア・ライブ

DATE A LIVE

七罪チェンジ

橘公司
The author
Koushi Tachibana

09

DATE A LIVE Change NATSUMI
デート・ア・ライブ 9 七罪チェンジ

「五河千代紙です。
いつもちちがおせわになっています」

「んもうっ、あーんですよ、あーん」
精霊――美九

「ああ、間違いなく、七罪、おまえだよ」
高校生――五河士織（いつかしおり）
「こ、これ……私……？」
精霊――七罪（なつみ）

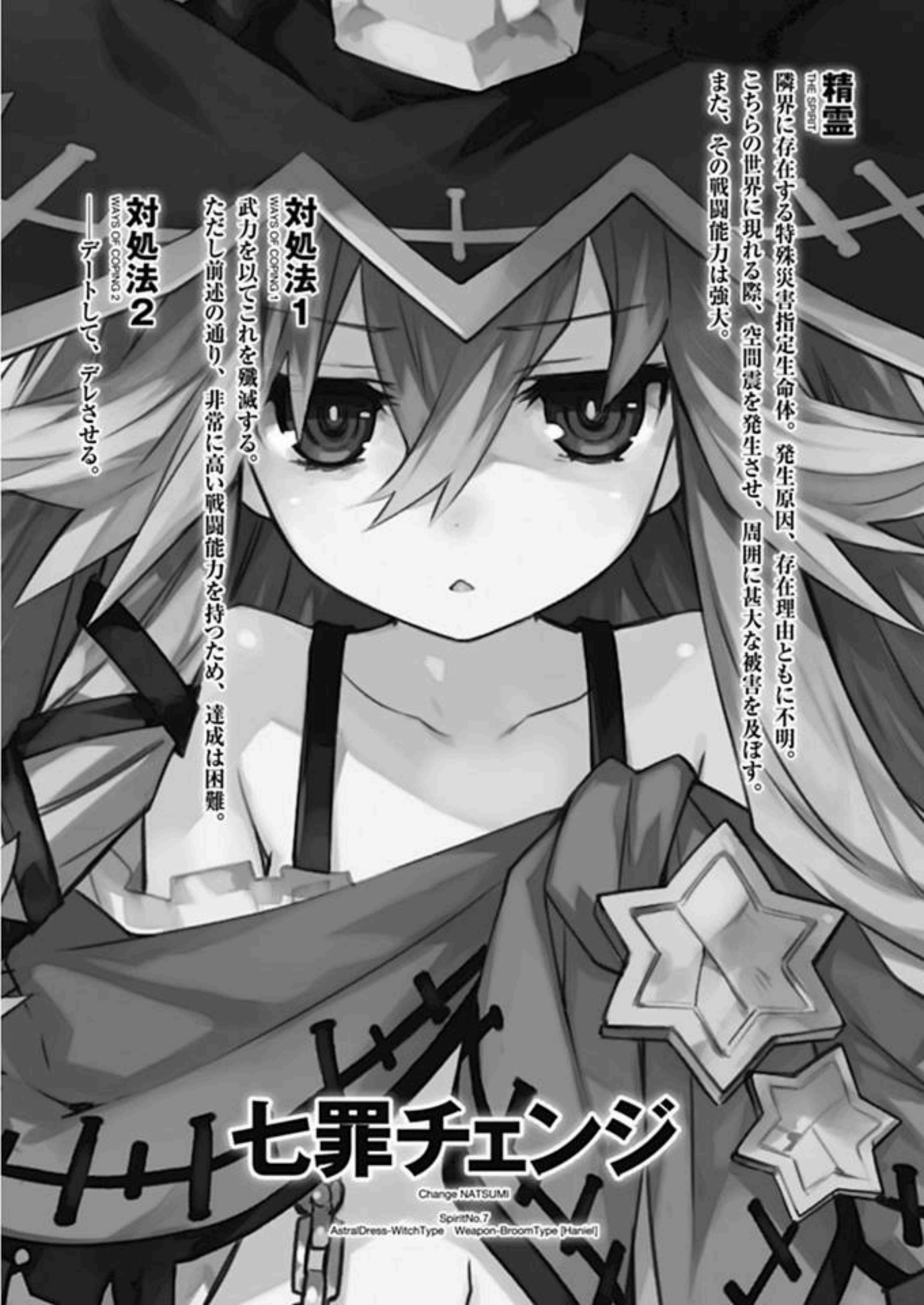
「さあ、始めましょうか。――私の戦争を」
〈ラタトスク〉司令官――五河琴里（いつかことり）

「……お母さん、か」
〈ラタトスク〉解析官――村雨令音（むらさめれいね）

CONTENTS

第六章　子供たち …… 004
第七章　闇からの手招き …… 051
第八章　変身 …… 098
第九章　嘘に決まってる …… 171
第一〇章　絶望が落ちてくる …… 217
終　章　DEMの魔術師 …… 301

あとがき …… 315


精霊
THE SPIRIT
隣界に存在する特殊災害指定生命体。発生原因、存在理由ともに不明。
こちらの世界に現れる際、空間震を発生させ、周囲に甚大な被害を及ぼす。
また、その戦闘能力は強大。
対処法1
WAYS OF COPING 1
武力を以てこれを殲滅する。
ただし前述の通り、非常に高い戦闘能力を持つため、達成は困難。
対処法2
WAYS OF COPING 2
――デートして、デレさせる。
七罪チェンジ
Change NATSUMI
SpiritNo.7
AstralDress-WitchType　Weapon-BroomType [Haniel]

Little Monsters

Chapter 6:The Children

Part 1

19th October, Sunday.

There is an uproar right now inside the Itsuka house.

“shidou! I am hungry, shidou!”

“Shidou, I want to pee. I can’t go alone. Follow me, Shidou”

“Darling! darling!”

“E-eerr…….Shidou-san……..”

“Everyone calm down! Wait, ah! Kaguya, Isn’t that my chupa chups!”

“Shidou! I want to eat rice, Shidou!”

“Kuku, you baby. Don’t be bound to such trivial matters, you will be disclosed as a pygmy you know?”

“Consent. Isn’t one okay”

“Wait, you two! Give that back!”

“Uu……..ueeeeeee……”

“Aaaaah, here, it’s okay, it’s okay”

"Shidou, it's going to leak"

"Ku-kukuku! I will not return it back once it has fallen to my hands!"

"Escape. Catch me if you want it back."

"Darling! Darling!"

"……."

Naturally, Itsuka Shidou was carrying his head while letting sweat drop down his cheeks.

Even though he has a headache from the lack of sleep under normal circumstances, the continuous echoing high pitched voice, and *bata**bata* footsteps were mercilessly hitting it. Incidentally, 4 sides of his shirts hem was being pulled from just now and is seemingly being stretched.

Inside the Itsuka house living room right now, there were 7 small demons……rather, small girls there.

Everyone's age is most likely around 10 years old. It is an age which causes a lot of problem even under normal situation. In addition, each one of them would cry, shout, pull Shidou, and chase each other as they please. Being charged to look after these girls starting from a few days back, Shidou's fatigue can easily be guessed.

But, that was only normal. It's not like the girls wanted to be like this. Shidou made a small sigh before lifting his face, looking at the little monsters rampaging in the living room.

One was calling him repeatedly because she was hungry, and is a beautiful girl with long black hair and crystal eyes.

One has been persistently trying to invite Shidou to the toilet from just now, and is an expressionless girl that looks like a doll.

One is a girl wearing a puppet in her left hand and looks like she is about to cry any moment soon.

One is a proud looking girl with her hair tied into two sides while eating chupa chups.

One is prank loving girl which is in the middle of escaping from the previous girl because she stole a candy.

One is a girl with a blank expression and has the face similar to the prank loving girl.

One is a girl with a very beautiful voice and is a little taller than everyone else.

Everyone would be very cute girls if they kept quiet. But--------the important thing wasn't that. Shidou looked at the girls by order and gulped. Shidou was familiar with these girls' faces.

Tohka, Origami, Yoshino, Kotori, Kaguya, Yuzuru, and also, Miku.

Yes. These girls are Shidou's friends or sisters, and completely have the same body characteristics.

If others who does not know anything about the situation sees this, they would probably think they are relatives or possibly someone else who miraculously look like them.

But, Shidou knows. These girls are unmistakably the real persons themselves.

If thinking normally, this would be an unthinkable phenomenon. Normally, the body of living things will, grow or age as time passes. But even so, Tohka and the group were turned into children as if their time was turned back by a few years' worth .

No…….more specifically, that representation might not be a random one.

Shidou does not know whether if the Tohka, Yoshino and the others spirit bodies grow just like humans as time passes. He has no confirmation whether Tohka and the group looked like this few years back ago.

Which means, rather than them having their times turned back, their bodies were [Transformed] into bodies of a child.

"Why would……Natsumi do this……."

My mind turned towards the witch figured girl and I muttered to myself.

Few days from right now. Shidou had a match with a spirit called Natsumi-------and achieved victory.

However after that, Natsumi transformed the body of everyone in that area before disappearing to somewhere.

As a result, from that day onwards, the situation in the Itsuka house has simply become a nursery.

“Shidou! Shidou!”

“Shidou, I am almost at my limit”

“U-uuu……”

“Why you, stop right there!”

“Fuhahaha! Come over here!”

“Scorn. Is that all?”

“Darling! Darling!”

“I get it! I get it so everyone please calm down for a while……….!”

Being pulled in four sides, even though his body was being swayed, he shouted. However, everyone totally did not quiet down.

And.

"……sorry to bother you"

When Shidou was in great perplexity like a homeroom teacher in a chaotic class, the living room door opened suddenly and one woman came in.

Having hair settled randomly and sleepy eyes decorated with splendid shades. In her chest pocket, there is a teddy bear with many scars stuffed in there. She is Shidou's class vice-homeroom teacher and also the analyst officer of the secret organization < Ratatoskr>, Murasame Reine.

"Reine-san!"

"……you looked troubled, Shin"

After Reine said that, she looked around the living room to understand the situation before, slowly extending her hands out forward slowly. She then caught the nape of the neck of the Yamai sisters running around the living room and stopped their movements.

"Nowaah!?"

"Impact. Kuhah"

Suddenly having their movements stopped, Kaguya and Yuzuru opened their eyes confused. But, after Reine gone down to her knees in a cool manner, she gently persuaded them by looking both of them at the eye.

"…….Kaguya, Yuzuru. It's not good to take someone else's belongings. You wouldn't like it if someone else eats your candy too right?"

After Reine said that, both of them hesitated unpleasantly.

"Gumu……"

"……..Reflection. Sorry"

"…….okay, both of you apologize to Kotori"

Reine* Pon* hit Kaguya and Yuzuru shoulders. When she did that, they looked back at Kotori's direction and lowered their head.

"Fuun…….I'm sorry"

"Apology. I won't do it anymore."

"…….how about it, Kotori. I will replace the candy taken away later. Will you forgive them?"

Saying that, Reine looked towards Kotori's direction, Kotori then snorted while folding her arms.

"I-I don't care anymore, really……..I am also sorry for not sharing"

"…….hnn, 3 of you are good kids"

Reine patted Kotori, Kaguya and Yuzuru's head in order. The 3 of them averted their sights away when she did that.

"……..alright then, I wonder what's wrong with that side"

Next off, Reine walked over to Shidou's side and looked at Tohka, Origami, Yoshino and Miku, these 4 who were clinging onto Shidou. She then heard what the 4 of them had to say before continuing her words slowly.

"……..Tohka, Shin is a little busy right now. Can you wait for your meal a little more? As exchange, I will specially give you this cookie……..Origami, Shin said he prefers a girl who can go to the toilet alone…….Yoshino, please be assured. Shin doesn't mind you accidentally breaking tableware during the morning……Miku, Shin can hear your voice clearly. It's not like he was ignoring you"

And so on, she talked to them one by one and easily calmed everyone who was making an uproar. It was a very skillful wile.

"I'm sorry…….you saved me. I couldn't do anything alone……."

"……no, I felt sorry for leaving everyone's care under you"

"No, I understand you are finding Natsumi's readings. But even so-------"

Shidou gazed at everyone who has completely calmed down while making a wry smile.

"That was amazing, Reine-san. It's like you're a mother"

"……."

Reine slightly twitched the side of her shoulders quietly, when Shidou said that casually.

At that moment, he immediately was taken back. It's not like he had other intentions but……rather, those were words filled with pure thoughts of respect but, thinking back calmly, it might be something not appropriate to be told to a woman who is unmarried yet. Shidou swung his hands in panic and take it back.

"I-I'm sorry. It's wrong. I don't mean it that way……."

"……..no, I don't mind"

However, Reine said that like she wasn't really bothered about it……since she is a female with an un-examinable expression normally, it was hard for him to make out if she was really not bothered about it.

"N-now that I think about it, Reine-san. Have you found Natsumi?"

In order to change the topic, Shidou let out his voice and Reine immediately cast her eyes downwards before swinging her head.

"……as expected, it seems Natsumi is able to conceal her Reiha. We have sent observation bots to go around in a vast range but, we have yet to find her readings……naturally, there is a possibility she was Lost to the other world already"

"I…….see"

As long as they are unable to find the reason which is Natsumi, it was certain that the situation will not get better. Shidou once again, gazed at the girls who have completely changed before looking back at Reine.

"But……I wonder why Natsumi would do something like this"

"…….Let's see, it might possibly be an emergency measure to escape from the spot, or maybe it might be she wanted to leave some kind of precaution behind by slicing off the battle assets of the Spirits. And----------"

"And?"

Shidou tilted his head before Reine erected one finger.

"…….It's just simple harassment I guess"

"……"

Hearing Reine's words, Shidou twitched his cheeks. Although it does sounds like a joke but, Shidou has no choice but to believe that is correct.

Part 2

It takes approximately 3 hours from the British Heathrow airport to reach Japan's Narita airport.

Having finishing the remaining simple business inside the private jet, Isaac Westcott came out from the VIP entrance of the airport and rode the car waiting for him before heading towards the lodging area in Japan's Tokyo metropolitan Tenguu city's hotel .

He was a characteristic tall man with dark ash blonde hair, and a pair of sharp eyes like naked blades. His age should be around in his mid-30 but, the dangerous atmosphere covering his body was disrupting the appropriateness of his age. At the least, he was somewhat too young to be burdened with a world class enterprise known as DEM industry---------such an impression was probably impossible to someone unless they have met with him directly.

"However, if we continue to have trips like this in short term, as expected it would be tiring. How about it, Ellen. Why not build a residence here in Japan?"

Wescott turned his shoulder while saying that before sharpening his eyes towards the Nordic blonde girl sitting beside him.

"Originally, the trip here to Japan this time was supposed to be postponed to later. Even though *something like that* just happened, I feel admiration for you to be able to leave your castle empty."

The girl said it with a strong tone. Ellen M Mathers. Westcott's direct subordinate and the captain of the 2nd executive division of the shadow execution team in DEM industry.

"Don't praise me like that. I'll feel embarrassed"

"I wasn't praising"

Ellen said it flat out. Westcott slightly shrugged his shoulders.

Nonetheless, it's not like she doesn't understand what he was saying. Actually a few days back, there was a request for Westcott' s dismissal in the board of director meeting that had taken place in the DEM industry main company HQ in Britain.

At that time, things were managed without any problems because of Ellen's **physical persuasion** but, if we were to leave the HQ this frequently then, the hated directors who do not think comfortably of Westcott will be given some sort of preparation time. The possibility of those people once again forming some kind of way to wave the flag of revolution is enough. It was only natural for Ellen to be nervous.

However, Wescott slightly distorted the side of his lips.

"Not really, if that is the case then I don't mind. I prefer humans filled with ambitions enough to bite off my neck when they get a chance"

"It might be okay for you but, please try placing yourself as someone that has to do the clean up afterwards"

When Westcott said that, Ellen pouted a little unsatisfied.

"More importantly, did you investigate that matter?"

"……..yes, over here"

Ellen made a small sigh and took out a bundle of documents which were restrained with a clip. Westcott received that before lowering his sights at the printed photo and row of literature.

It was an investigation document of the boy Itsuka Shidou and the environment around him.

"……..I see. He became an adopted son in the current house from 10 years ago, huh. And his sister is being suspected as the Spirit <Efreet>…….well it's quite amazing you gathered this much. No……..I should have it completed huh"

Westcott giggled and flipped the documents. In the next paper, photos of a number of girls were printed on it.

"<Princess>, <Hermit>, <Berserk>, <Diva>------and the <Efreet > from just now. From what you have confirmed, there are really 6 spirits gathered around him. Ellen, what do you see in this?"

"…….There is no mistake <Ratatoskr> is in this"

Towards Westcott's question, Ellen took a slight peek unsatisfied while opening her mouth.

"There is probably no mistake in that. The boy who is able to seal the Spirit's power---------there is no mistake <Ratatoskr> is using that. No matter if he has that power, unless there is a back-up from a big organization then, sealing this number of Spirits is……..no, before that, it is even impossible for him to attempt contacting the spirits. But-------"

After Westcott cut his words, *pin* he flicked the documents with his finger.

“But, is that really all?”

“And, by that you mean?”

Ellen asked dubiously. Westcott shrugged his shoulders.

“Just like what I meant. Was it really our sworn enemy < Ratatoksr>’s will only, which has really resulted in this bringing up of such a beautifully distorted situation”

“……are you saying there is someone behind the scenes controlling the strings?”

“Well I wonder. But, even if that is the case, there is no change in the things we have to do.----------am I right? Ellen. Ellen M Mathers. Humanity’s strongest wizard.”

When he said that, Ellen took a few seconds staring at Westcott’ s face to find his motives before, lowering her head forward.

“Of course”

On her face, hesitation and confusion could not be seen at all. Westcott nodded in satisfaction.

“That’s the way.-----I’ll have you move immediately once you have finished the preparations.”

"--------roger. So, who should I start with. As expected, the < Princess>?"

Ellen said that while lowering her sights at the documents on Westcott's hands. But, Wescott replied [No] and swung his head.

"I am thinking of letting the spirits on this documents go free for a while.------of course, if there is a good chance then it's alright for you to capture them"

"What do you mean?"

Westcott showed <Princess> Yatogami Tohka's photo towards Ellen who asked.

"<Princess> inversing is new to your memories right? The fact that our beloved [Demon king] has shown itself in front of us"

"Yes"

"The reason for that------is none other than the boy, Itsuka Shidou. During that time you tried to kill him, <Princess> was consumed by the pool of despair and strongly desired a power crossing her own domain-------as a result, she was able to hold the grip of the Demon king <Nahema>"

Westcott placed the documents on his lap and spread out both his hands.

"The [Demon King] we have not stopped yearning appeared so easily, I wonder who on earth has imagined that. The Spirit-------at

the very least <Princess>, values, trusts and loves him to the depths of her heart. Isn't this wonderful? They will probably deepen their trusts even more. For the time that will come…….neh"

At that moment, it seems Ellen also guessed Westcott's intention. Her expression did not change and **I see**, she lowered her head forward.

The more Itsuka deepens his relation with the spirits, the more the spirits relies on Itsuka Shidou, the deeper and bigger the despair will become once they loses it. From there-------it might be enough for them to extend their hands towards a power not within their domain.

"I am planning to use Itsuka Shidou as a [Key]"

"A [Key] huh. I see, that's a good way to put it"

Westcott made a small smile at Ellen's words.

"This is ironic. To think the secret anti-spirit weapon <Ratatoskr > came up with, would become our joker too"

"It isn't particularly rare for medicine to become poison. However-------"

He was able to guess what Ellen was about to say without her finishing the sentence. The thing is, which Spirit Ellen should capture then.

Westcott made an exaggerated nod before continuing.

"Aah regarding that, I have already established a new priority target. Yesterday, just perfectly, we received an Intel from the AST. The spirit who has the power of transformation------<Witch> has appeared in the vicinity of the Tenguu city, and has not been confirmed to be lost yet……..like that"

Part 3

"……..Good Morning"

Next morning. While making a big yawn, Shidou entered the Itsuka house living room.

In the end, everyone who has turned into a child didn't return back to the mansion next door, and it has been made to sleep together in groups; consisting of a group in Shidou's room (Shidou , Tohka, Yoshino, Miku) and the other in Kotori's (Kotori, Kaguya, Yuzuru) but……..during the night, Yoshino and Miku would cling onto Shidou and incidentally, since Tohka was riding on top of Shidou's chest, he has not really slept.

Although, it was not like everyone stayed in the Itsuka house. There was only one, only Origami said [I have something to do] and returned back in a very reluctant manner.

Thinking back for some reason after that, Shidou's underwear, toothbrush and several personal belonging couldn't be found but …….when on earth did he lose them?

"Good morning Shidou"

"Good morning darling"

"Go-good…..morning……."

"U-n, what a nice morning"

Like that, Kotori, Miku, Yoshino, and also [Yoshinon] who were already in the living room, turned towards Shidou's direction and greeted him.

"Ou, everyone sure woke up early"

When Shidou said that, 3 of them and 1 object made expressions as they pleased.

"This is the minimum self-management"

"Err, this is my normal waking time…….so"

"Being early to bed and early to rise is the comrade to the skin. It is only normal for an idol"

Kotori folded her arms while opening half her eyes, Yoshino narrowed her shoulders shyly, Miku said that proudly while patting her cheeks. **I see**, it seems these 3's daily life rhythm didn't break even though they were transformed into kids.

Shidou recalled back Tohka's happy sleeping face when he exited his room and unintentionally smiled. Since they are not here , it means the Yamai sisters are still sleeping in Kotori's room. How should he put it, it was oddly pleasant.

"----alright then. Wait for me a bit. I'll make breakfast soon"

After Shidou said that, he tied the apron around his body and washed his hands before starting to cook breakfast.

After mixing sugar into milk and egg, he dipped an easily edible slice of bread into it and pan fry the slice on the frying pan with butter melted in it. Simple and delicious, it was a simple French toast. Naturally, during the time when flavor was soaking into the bread, he did not forget to prepare the salad and soup. Not even taking 20 minutes, the Itsuka house living room was drifting with an appetizing smell.

"Okay, I'll be done soon so go clear the table"

""""Okay""""

The 3 girls in the living room started moving when Shidou called out to them. Yoshino cleaned up the things on the table, Kotori wiped the table with a table cloth and Miku carried the plates with the food on it. It wasn't particularly a weird sight but, since the girls looked young right now, it oddly feels like they are [Helping out][9A 1]

"Well then, let's eat. Itadakimasu"

""""Itadakimasu""""

The 3 of them followed Shidou and joined their hands together before lowering their head.

"! It's……..delicious"

"Hn, well just average"

Yoshino opened her eyes wide after carrying the French toast to her mouth while, Kotori *fufun* snorted. Although she complained, he was honestly happy that they were enjoying his cooking. Shidou relaxed his cheeks while poking into his French toast with a fork.

"Nee Nee, Darling, Darling"

And thus, when Shidou was about to eat his toast, Miku who was sitting beside him pulled his sleeves.

"Hnn, what's wrong Miku?"

After Shidou said that, Miku joined her both her hand near her chest while closing her eyes, she then [Ahhn] opened her mouth.

"Eh?"

"Hn Mouuu, feed me, Ahnnn"

Miku made an angry posture before opening her mouth again.

"A-ahh……."

After cutting the toast to a mouth size piece, he brought it to Miku's mouth. After he did that, Miku used both her hands and pressed her cheeks while bouncing her voice happily.

"Uuun! It's delicious. It becomes even more exceptional when I had darling feed me."

"Haha……well, I think the taste doesn't change though."

When Shidou looked back at his place while making a wry smile, he found out Kotori sitting in front of him, and Yoshino sitting diagonal from him was making a shocked expression.

"Both of you too?"

After Shidou said that, Kotori and Yoshino [Mumuu…….] frowned their eyebrows difficultly.

And, at that moment.

"Tou!"

"Kya……..!?"

Wondering what on earth was it thinking, [Yoshinon] quickly gave Yoshino's right hand a sharp chop and made her dropped the fork she was holding.

"O-oi, Yoshinon?"

"Aaan! Sorry Shidou-kun. Yoshino dropped her fork from Yoshinon's mistake. I am sorry but, will you feed Yoshino too?"

"Huh……? I don't mind but more importantly, you can get a new fork……."

“Will. You. Feed. Her?”

[Yoshinon] brought its face closer, and said it threateningly. Shidou [O-ou……..] nodded as if he was overpowered.

“E-errr…….Shidou-san…….sorry”

“No, it isn’t Yoshino’s fault right? Here, Ahnn”

“A-ahnn…….”

After Shidou brought out the fork with toast pierced on it, Yoshino hesitantly opened her mouth as big as possible.

Yoshino then stuffed the toast into her cheeks and *amu**amu* chewed it before making a smile in a little embarrassed state.

“Thank……you very much. It really is……..delicious”

“I see. That is good”

Shidou smiled and changed the fork Yoshino dropped before once again facing back to his plate. But------

“……muu…….”

At that moment, he saw Kotori sitting in front of him with red eyes as if she was going to cry any moment and it once again obstructed him from eating.

“…….errrr”

As expected, Shidou knows it too. Maybe it's because she turned into a child, he felt it was easier to read her expression's ups and downs easier than usual. Just like what he did to Miku and Yoshino, Shidou directed a mouth size cut toast towards Kotori.

"Here Kotori, Ahhn"

"……! I-it's not like I asked you for that. Please don't treat me like a child!?"

"……no, you're a child."

"Uguh…….!"

Kotori, *muuu*……..groaned before stuffing her cheeks with the toast.

And after gulping it down, she pouted her lips and averted her sights before letting out a soft voice.

"……Thank you"

"Aiyo, you're welcome"

After Shidou said that, he finally shoved the toast into his mouth.

But, at that moment, *Chari* the living room door suddenly opened------and Tohka with a very sleepy face came into the room.

"…….mu, it seems there is a nice smell……..."

After saying that, *Fuuaaa*……she made a big yawn.

It was a very Tohka-like waking up pattern. After Shidou and the group looked at each other, everyone laughed.

"--------now that I think about it, what are you planning to do today?"

After some time passed, they finished their breakfast and Kotori who has completely regained her composure looked towards Shidou and asked.

Incidentally, right after Tohka finished eating her French toast, she layed down on the sofa satisfied and once again went traveling into the dream world.

"Aah, today, I thought of going to school for now. There is Natsumi and I feel uneasy leaving Tohka and the rest alone, so I plan to finish school early in the afternoon……..as expected, I am also worried about Tonomachi and the rest too"

Shidou scratched his cheeks while saying that. Yes. Actually Tohka, Kotori and the group wasn't the only ones that got dragged into the problem a few days ago.

That's because Shidou's classmate Tonomachi Hiroto, Yamabuki Ai, Hazakura Mai, Fujibakama Mii, and also the class homeroom teacher Okamine Tamae these 5 people were temporarily trapped inside an Angel because of the Spirit Natsumi .

Luckily, they were not turned into children like Tohka and the rest but, it doesn't change the fact Shidou dragged them into something dangerous. Having their consciousness regained, he wanted to confirm their safety directly with his own eyes.

"I see. I understand. But even so, the current situation is, we don't know where Natsumi is right now. Please be careful"

"Aah, I get it.------I'll be off then, once Kaguya and Yuzuru wakes up, heat up their breakfast for them. Actually, it would taste good right after freshly made but, I am afraid of letting you use fire"

"Like I said, stop treating me like a ……."

Kotori stopped her words until there and distorted her mouth unsatisfied while nodding.

Shidou [Good girl good girl] patted Kotori's head (Naturally, Miku and Yoshino pestered him too) before putting on his blazer and arranging his outfit, he then put on his shoes and placed his hands on the front door knob.

"Well then, I am leaving the rest to you all. I will wear the Incam just in case so, please call me if there is something"

"Yeah yeah, I get it"

"Have a safe……..trip"

"Darling, what about the Chuu[9A 2]? What about the goodbye kiss?"

Kotori and Yoshino waved their hands while, Miku brought out her lips and pestered him for a kiss. After Shidou made a wry smile while waving back to them, he opened the door and exited.

It was a clear weather. Opposite of the complex Shidou and the group were placed into right now, it was a day with comfortable clear autumnal weather.

"Hnn……"

Shidou made a stretch as if he was exposing his body to the sun before starting to head towards the school.

"……?"

But, after a few steps outside his house gate, Shidou suddenly stopped. He then brought his eyes left and right like that……..and tilted his head.

"There is no one……..right?"

For an instant, I felt someone's sights but……it's probably his imagination.

He might still be very nervous since Natsumi's matter has not been solved yet. Shidou took a deep breath to calm his heart beat and once again walked towards his school.

"Listen to me Itsuka! I had a very superb, weird body experience!"

Shidou entered the 2nd year class 4 and a boy with ruffled up hair using wax approached Shidou in an excited manner. It was the mentioned student------Tonomachi Hiroto.

From what he could see, there was nothing wrong with his body. Shidou pat his chest after seeing his close buddy looks lively while *Goodness sake* opened his mouth.

"What on earth happened Tonomachi. You remembered you are a descendant of Bigfoot?"

"That's right, the hair on my arm has been growing fast recently ……wait, nononono"

Tonomachi took an overreaction from Shidou's joke before, * Vuun*Vuun*swinging his head.

"That's not it! An alien an alien!"

"Alien? I see, I thought you are a UMA on earth but, I never would have thought you are an alien……."

"Wait, wrong wrong! That's not it! When I fell asleep on the night of the 25th, the next time I woke up was on the 28th!"

"Oi oi, don't you think you have been sleeping too much?"

"Yes! It's weird right!? It was actually that weird! Several days passed when I woke up and what's more, when I asked my family,

during that time, it seems I disappeared somewhere! Once I noticed, a police search for me came out! I was scared!"

"So, an alien?"

"Aah! That's because there is no other explanation right!?"

Shidou *pori*pori* scratched his cheeks. Tonomachi was unmistakably talking about the time he was captured by Natsumi' s angel. But, there was no way he could tell him about that and more importantly [No Tonomachi, it was the work of a spirit instead of an alien. You were captured by a spirit's angel. Incidentally, the spacequakes are the works of spirits too. And actually, I have the power to seal the spirits power too] even if he was frank and honest, Tonomachi would [Ah, I-i see……..well, I have to prepare for class so…….] probably take an oddly distant attitude and would probably end up running away too. Shidou remained looking at Tonomachi with doubtful eyes. Anyways, it was good he was okay.

Maybe they heard Tonomachi's high tension talk, 3 female students entered Shidou's view.

"Oou, hey wait wait"

"That's one interesting talk"

"So Tonomachi is in the weird body experience group?"

They are Tohka's friends and------just like Tonomachi, the trios were also dragged into the incident from few days ago and, from the tallest they were Ai, Mai, Mii.

"Oh? Judging from the way you put it, you girls too?"

When Tonomachi asked, Ai Mai Mii *un**un* nodded.

"Yes yes, that's right. No one would believe us"

"We also have no memories of these past few days"

"Doesn't this really mean aliens? Or maybe the work of a secret mysterious organization?"

All 3 of them said that and, *yanyanyan* became excited.

"Speaking of which, Tama-chan said she had the same body experience too"

"Eh, seriously? Then this isn't a coincidence anymore"

"So this is the 5th person……..I sense the smell of some kind of plot……..!"

"Don't tell me, we were really kidnapped by a secret mysterious organization!?"

"We have powers transcending humans from receiving the reconstruction surgery!?"

"What's more there are 5 people……..this flow is the teaming of a hero sentai[9A 3]!"

Ai Mai Mii [Tou!] took a cool pose as if the arranged this beforehand.

"Come on, Red too!"

"O-ou!?"

Tonomachi was also pulled in. He then took a cool pose in front of those 3.

"Alright, let's combine our powers and defeat the bad monsters spreading out in the world!"

"Bad monsters……?"

"Yes, nearby us there is one already, a human disguised monster living and doing bad things!"

"Specifically, one that would suddenly fondle girl's breast as it likes, flips up skirts and would steal girl's lips!"

"Prepare yourself! Obscene monster Itsuka Shidou!"

"Me!?"

Suddenly pointed at, Shidou twitched his shoulders.

Now that he thinks about it, a few days ago Natsumi disguised exactly as Shidou and played several pranks in the school. They probably still have a grudge from that time.

"S-so that was it huh Itsuka……I thought no wonder you were acting weird recently"

"As expected, you have something that comes to mind Tonomachi-kun!"

"A-aah……a little before my memories were cut off, I was oddly bothered about Itsuka's sights……..then when I got called to the sauna, he then touched my body……..."

"Kya! Kya!"

"I-Itsuka-kun, you were someone from that side……..!?"

"Ogi-chan! The committee chief of the [The School's selected best fujoshi couple] Ogi-chan! A circumstance to rework the ranking has occurred!"

"Itsuka……..like I guessed, was it really stuff like that……..?"

"No, why is Tonomachi following them too! Forget that look; it' s almost time for homeroom"

At the same time with Shidou saying that, *Kin**Kon**Kan*……
…….a familiar chime echoed across the classroom.

"Look look, Sensei is coming"

"Don't play it off! Itsuka, you really…….!"

Tonomachi ignored the chime and said it enthusiastically. But,

"Ah, it's already time for homeroom"

"I have to get back to my seat"

"What was today's first period"

Ai Mai Mii left easily. They probably don't acknowledge this but, that was an amazing example of pretending to help somebody and pull away the ladder away under him. After a while with sweat flowing down his cheeks, Tonomachi said [W-well, later…… …..] and went back to his seat.

Not long after that, the classroom door opened and a petite glass wearing female entered. She was Shidou's class homeroom teacher and one of the people that got dragged into the previous incident, Okamine Tamae, for short Tama-chan.

It seems, Sensei is okay too. Shidou released a relieved sigh and------raised his eyebrows.

The reason was simple. Tama-chan-sensei looks weird. Sweat was oozing out her forehead, her eyes was swimming around and from what could be seen, it looks like she was feeling shaken. What on earth happened to her?

When Shidou was looking at her state suspiciously, Tama-chan suddenly sends her sights towards Shidou. She then hesitantly opened her mouth.

“Errr…….Itsuka-kun”

“W-what is it?”

After Shidou replied, Tama-chan-sensei made a bewildered face .

“Err,errrm, There are visitors for Itsuka-kun but, err……..”

“I have visitors…….?”

Shidou wrung his head. He has no one that comes to mind that would purposely visit him in school. He first thought it was someone related to <Ratatoskr> but if that was the case then, they would probably contact him about that.

“……!”

And at that moment, 2 possibilities passed Shidou’s mind.

Which means, the DEM industry and……..Spirit-Natsumi.

“Where are the visitors?”

“Ah, yes, they are right now in the staff room……”

But, the instant Tama-chan-sensei said that.

"Shidou!"

A very lively voice could be heard at the classroom entrance.

"Wha…….!?"

Shidou brought his eyes towards there------and gasped.

Over there was not an assassin from DEM industry nor was it Natsumi…….it was the small Tohka that was supposed to be sleeping at home.

Tama-chan-sensei quickly stopped Tohka.

"Aah, you can't! Didn't I tell you to wait in the staff room!"

"Mu? Why is that Tama-chan-sensei? I can't be inside the classroom?"

"Errr about that, this is a place for Onii-san and Onee-san[9A 4] to study so……."

"I will study with Shidou too!"

"Errr, like I said, you have to wait until you get older……."

Tama-chan-sensei tried calming Tohka down while making a troubled face.

When she was doing that, more small silhouettes appeared behind Tohka.

"Kuku, what are you doing?"

"Disturb. We will attend to that later."

"……..."

Same as her, Kaguya and Yuzuru who were supposed to be asleep in the Itsuka house and Origami who went back home, entered the classroom in groups with Tohka.

The classroom started making a commotion from the unexpected visitor. The reactions are largely separated to 3 types. [Why are elementary school students here……..?] people wringing their head, [Yaaan, so cute!] people raising excited voices , and also [A-re? I feel like I've seen these kids somewhere……] people raising their eyebrows, about there.

At that instant. Kotori's voice could be heard from the Incam he equipped on his ear.

"-----dou! Shidou! Can you hear me? It's an emergency! Tohka and the group disappeared from the house!"

"……..aah, they came here"

"Eh……..!?"

At that moment, Tohka looked towards Shidou and her face lighted up, *tetete* she then run towards Shidou and jumped at him.

"Oo Shidou! You are here like I guessed!"

And next, Kaguya and Yuzuru came running towards Shidou.

“Oi Shidou, go and get through the head of the homeroom teacher of our 2nd year class 3. That person wouldn’t believe us even though we told that person we are the Yamai’s”

“Sigh. That is one adult that decides everything from appearances.”

After saying that, they made a tired sigh. When they were doing that, there were whispers secretly going around Shidou’s surroundings. He could not hear what they were saying but, [Lolicon] [Criminal] [Hell no] he was only able to hear such words.

It was clear that they were negative whispers but, now wasn’t the time to be bothering about that. He looked back at Tohka and the group, and let out his voice.

“……why are you all over here?”

“Mu? You asked something strange. We have school today. Although we slept together, I got shocked once I noticed that Shidou disappear!”

“……!?”

Everyone in the class made shocked expressions from Tohka’s words and directed their sights toward Shidou.

“Hey Itsuka-kun, who are these children……..?”

"What kind of relationship…….?"

"Forget that, are you sleeping together…….?"

Ai Mai Mii raised their eyebrows doubtfully and looked at Shidou and Tohka's face respectively. Shidou ran through his thoughts to think of an excuse in panic.

But, faster than Shidou's voice, a small shadow *tsu**tsu**tsu*……..came closer to Shidou before, hugging onto Shidou like Tohka.------it was Origami.

And,

"---Papa"

She said something like that so, the class turned noisy in an instant.

"Wha……..!?"

"Papa!? She just said papa right!?"

"L-little girl, what is your name…….?"

Ai folded her knees, looked directly at Origami and gently (Her eyes was swimming around from agitation) asked her. When she did that, Origami then took a bow politely before continuing her words.

"I am Itsuka Chiyogami. Thank you for taking care of my father all the time"

"O-oi…….!?"

"My mama is Tobiichi Origami. I am the fruit of my papa and mama's love"

"……eeh!!"

An impact ran through the class. Agitated voices like whispers and uproars expanded throughout.

"No-now that you mention it, you do look like Tobiichi-san……!?"

"Eh, you're joking, Tobiichi-san gave birth in high school……!?"

"No but, you can get married once you reach 16 so, it is legal….."

"It has to be 18 for the male! Itsuka is in the out!"

"Rather, doesn't this child look like Yatogami Tohka-san? And that one looks like Yamai-san next door!"

"Eh? Don't tell me 1 husband and many wives!?"

"B-but, won't that be weird!? These children look 8 to 9 years old right? That means they gave birth to a child when everyone was 8 years old……..!? Itsuka-kun, you impregnate girls at 8 years old……!?"

"No, but the youngest record for giving birth is 5 years old and 7 months so, it is not impossible……."

"Wa-wait a second! It's a misunderstanding, a misunderstanding!"

He refuses to have more weird rumors spread out than this. Shidou raised a shout from the depth of his stomach and stopped the limitlessly excited topic.

"These children are……..err, that! I have been entrusted with these children from a relative! What they meant by papa is you know, a form of nickname!" "Ee—h……..?"

Suspicious sights closed in on Shidou when he made the excuse. Honestly, I thought the excuse was hard but thinking logically, they probably knew it was impossible for Shidou, a high school student to have children, although everyone in class made faces as if it doesn't made sense, they showed agreement tentatively.

"U---n……I see.

"Hey--. It does sound plausible"

"But it is true you slept with these children right? Your lolicon suspicion isn't gone"

"……oi"

When he opened half his eyes from the several suspicious murmurs, everyone in the class *ahaha* purposely laughed. He made a tired sigh.

"Seriously, saying whatever they want……..look, everyone. I plan to quit school early today too so, let's go back together"

When he looked back at them and said that, Tohka opened her eyes wide from the unexpectedness.

"Nu? Going back already?"

"Aah, I accomplished my goal. I will go immediately once homeroom is over so, will you wait in the staff room?"

"Muu…….I understand. If Shidou says so, I'll wait"

Tohka said that and nodded honestly.

"Sorry. Alright then, for the time being------"

The moment Shidou placed his hands on Tohka's shoulders.

"Eh……?"

Shidou frown his eyebrows in reflex. He felt something shined outside the classroom window.

But, that odd feeling immediately disappeared.------thanks to Tohka's echoing voice from below and the commotion the classmates filling his surroundings.

"Wha…….!"

"? What's wrong, Tohka------"

Shidou returned his sights from the window back to Tohka and stopped his words.

But that was only normal. That's because, the sewing on the clothes Tohka was wearing, untied itself starting from the part Shidou touched.

"Wh-what are you doing Shidou!"

Tohka's face turned red and crouched down on the spot to cover her exposed shoulders.

"Hey Itsuka-kun, what are you doing!?"

"You showed your real self you lolicon bastard!"

"Eh……? Heh……?"

However, Shidou has no idea what happened. The moment Shidou touched Tohka, her clothes scattered……..? There is no way that is possible-------

But at that moment, one possibility popped out in Shidou's mind. The light that shined in from outside the window just now. That might be------

"No way, Natsumi……..!?"

Shidou said that in a voice which no one else can hear before once again looking at the window's direction.

Yes. The Spirit-Natsumi who holds the Angel that can transform objects to anything she pleases. It should be possible to her. Which means, rather than untying the sews, its more towards transforming the [Clothe] to [scattered cloth].

The moment he recognizes that, Shidou directed his legs towards the window.

But, it seems to be displayed as a runaway of a criminal to everyone in the class. Ai Mai Mii made a wall and blocked Shidou' s advancement.

"Wait you bastaaaaard!"

"Where are you running away after shaming a pure girl!"

"We caught you red-handed! We won't let you go!"

"W……wrong! I beg you, don't block me!"

However, no matter what Shidou said, it seems Ai Mai Mii does not plan to back away. They linked their shoulders and stood in front of Shidou.

"Kuh-----!"

Shidou had no choice but to push aside those 3. But the moment he did that, a light was produced outside the window once again, and the clothes of those three scattered, resulting the girls to show their soft fair skin.

"K-kyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!?"

"Wh-what is thiiiiissssssss!"

"Rukanaaaaaaan!?"

3 of them raised a scream and crouched on the spot. Terror expanded throughout the classroom.

"O-oi, that's too much Itsuka…….!"

Tonomachi then placed his hands on Shidou to stop him. But, Shidou couldn't do anything even though he was told that.

"No, I didn't really-------"

Like that for the third time, a light flickered from outside the window and Tonomachi's clothes blasted off this time.

"Iyaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!?"

Tonomachi screamed and fell down facing up just like that. Incidentally, a part of his raveled clothes skillfully hid his crotch. It was a miracle.

"O-oi, what was that…….!"

"The clothes in an instant…….!?"

"People will be stripped the moment they touch Itsuka-kun!?"

"No, like I said, i-------"

The moment Shidou tried to make an explanation for himself, Tama-chan-sensei in front of Shidou's sights had her clothes scattered this time.

"Uwakyaaaaaaaaaaaaa!?"

Tama-chan used the attendance record to cover her chest while directing a blaming gaze at Shidou.

"Wha-what are you doing Itsuka-kun! I'll have no choice but to make you marry me and take responsibility…….!"

"No, I didn't touch you right!?"

Even though he shouted it was a serious false accusation, it seems everyone in class did not listen.

"Don't tell me, just by his sights only……..!?"

"Oh my god! Is he a monster!?"

"Aaaah mou……..!"

After Shidou scratched his head, he placed his blazer on top of Tohka.

"Everyone! It's Natsumi! We are heading back for now!"

""""……!""""

Tohka, Origami, Kaguya and Yuzuru these four people guessed everything just from Natsumi's name. They then nodded and left the classroom with Shidou.

"Hey wait Itsuka, you bastaaaaaard!"

"Remember this the next time you come backkkkkkkk!"

"I'll strip you fully nakeddddd!"

"……That was hell"

Right after separating with Origami half-way through. Shidou walked heavily on the road towards his house while making a big sigh.

"Are you okay, Shidou"

Tohka who was rolling herself in Shidou's blazer looked up at him worried. Shidou then pat her head gently before, making a smile to Tohka to make her relieved.

But, it did not do anything to solve the situation. Shidou immediately contacted Kotori right after that, and had her search the place Natsumi appears to be at but, it seems there was not even a single speck of clues found. If these types of sly harassments were to continue from now on, Shidou might be killed by society.

Naturally, even with that left out, he could not ignore the problem of her forcing Tohka and the group into such inconvenience. After Shidou looked at the 3 of them, he renewed his determination by grasping his fist tightly.

"We have to……..quickly find Natsumi"

"Kuku, that's right. We'll have her pay for her life for making us look like this."

"Consent. We'll beat her violently."

"No, I won't do something that dangerous you know……..?"

Shidou made a wry smile while taking a turn, and reached the front of the Itsuka house. But.

"……hnn?"

Shidou wrung his head. His house was not in the place which was at according to his memories.

No. Putting it correctly, another building has been built on the spot which was supposed to have his house there; that seems to be a better way to say it. It was not fitting for a quiet residential area and it has a shape of a castle-------

"Ooou! It's a dream park!"

Tohka bounced her voice. Yes, for some reason Shidou's house has transformed exactly into the resting hotel which is located at the outskirts of the city.

"Thi-this is……."

After a few seconds, his eyes were blinking in panic from not being to understand what happened but, he immediately noticed. There is only one possible Spirit that can do this that comes to mind.

"Natsumi……"

Shidou said that with sweat flowing down his cheeks before touching the Incam on his ear.

"……..oi, Kotori, Kotori"

After calling like that, Kotori's voice could be heard not long later.

"What? What's wrong. If it's Natsumi's trace, then we haven't-----"

"No, it's not that……will you show your face outside from the window?"

"Eh?"

After a few seconds from then. Kotori brought her face out from one of the windows installed on the hotel wall.

"Wh-what the hell is this……..!? The shape of the house is ……!?"

It seems she did not notice this. Kotori raised a shocked voice. It seems only the appearance was transformed.

"…….aah, it's most likely Natsumi's work"

"*Tsk*……that's one annoying power. Anyways, the inside is okay so come back"

"A-aah……."

After Shidou nodded, he was about to bring Tohka and the rest into the house which could only be seen as a hotel.

However at that moment, the wifes gossiping on the road raised their voices.

"A-re, Shidou-kun from the Itsuka house? What is with those children……."

"Eh!? N-no, this is eerrrr……."

"Oh my? Was there such a building built here before…….?"

"Rather, Shidou-kun…….? Were you trying to bring those children in there?"

"Eeeh! This is bad! Police! Police!"

"iih…….!?"

He can't have himself be reported. Shidou brought Tohka and the rest and ran away from the spot.

Head Hunting

Chapter 7: Beckoning From The Darkness

Part 1

There is a heavy atmosphere being filled right now in the meeting room of the DEM industry Britain HQ.

It was as if the atmosphere really has the aspect of viscosity in it . Breathing would feel hard as if the lungs would be filled with a muddy feeling in just one breath. If someone was thrown into this room without knowing anything then, they might seriously get dyspepsia.

All of the males sitting in the row have several things in common. One of it was, all of them were British. Another one was, all of them are board directors in DEM industry. And one more----------all of them had gypsum bandages covering either their right arm or left arm.

"…….Damn it!"

A man at his prime and wearing glasses- board member Roger Murdoch was the one who broke the long silence.

"Everyone, is it alright to leave it like this!? Are you planning to keep quiet even though we are done in like this!?"

He shouted in detest and showed his right arm which was being hoisted from his neck just like everyone else.

---The arm which was cut off during the board meeting a few days ago.

Yes. All of the board directors here right now pushed a dismal request on the Managing director of DEM industry a few days back and-------- it overturned with physical violence used.

Their lobbed off arm was already connected back beautifully using the medical Realizer and they are able to move their fingers as they like. However, the scenery of their arm disappearing in an instant still remained in their minds and even now; none of them has removed their gypsum yet. "……Even if you say that"

A man with a beard------Simpson, looked towards Murdoch. His sights looked slightly scared------ and it's filled with criticism towards Murdoch. Nonetheless, this was not limited to this man. Although everyone in the meeting did not voice it out, it was not hard to imagine all of them hold the same feeling.

But that was only natural. In the first place--------Murdoch was the one who drew the plan for the request of Westcott's dismissal.

Westcott invented the revolutionary machine known as Realizer and build up the company known as DEM industry, his achievements are immeasurable. But, to the board directors of DEM Company now, his arrogant existence which swings his absolute authority without thinking about external influences was just a nuisance.

At that time, outrageous news about Westcott causing deplorable events in Japan came over.

Not only did he cause the destruction of the DEM's japan branch 1st and 2nd office building and connected buildings, he also caused the deaths and injuries of several Wizards. It was a good opportunity to question his responsibilities.

But-----The result was *this*.

Simpson ooze out a given up expression while swinging his head.

"You should have renewed your thoughts from this matter. He is a monster. He is different from us. His thoughts, value system, and his authority to make that reality……..Everything. We were the foolish one for looking at a dream even if it was for an instant"

Murdoch grasped his left hand while looking back at Simpson.

"……but even so. I am planning to have him receive the appropriate punishment"

The board directors made a small sigh at Murdoch's words. Most likely, it could be taken as a brave front from Murdoch.

"Punishment……..huh. What are you planning to do?"

Simpson said that while shrugging his shoulders. However he did not say it with a front or in an act of courage. He shook his throat after glaring at the board directors lined up.

"Westcott MD right now is in Japan if I am correct. It seems he is at a place where Spirits frequently appears at an extremely high rate"

"Is there a problem with that?"

"This is worrying.*-----it would be a big problem if he is by any chance, dragged into a space quake or some kind of accident*"

"**……..!!**"

The board directors gasped at the words with the deep meaning and strong accent.

"Murdoch, don't tell me you……..."

Simpson said that in a terrified manner.

Not only him, but everyone in the spot probably understood.

---Murdoch was suggesting the assassination of Westcott.

"……"

After a while, silence flowed into the meeting room. Everyone was swimming their sights at other board directors to await their responses.

Nonetheless, it was easy to imagine his plan of [Taking away someone's life] was not something he was hesitant about. If he did not have that kind of admirable emotions then, he would not be sitting in the seats of DEM company board directors.

Fear was simply the only thing they were worried about.------ the thing is, by the occasion the assassination has failed, they were scared that Westcott's might take revenge on them.

But. After some time, one of the board directors raised his voice.

"……..that's right. It is worrying. Very worrying"

Those unnatural words could only mean he agrees with Murdoch's plan.

"…….Aah, it is just as you say"

One person after another then states words of worry for Westcott-----and soon, everyone showed approval to Murdoch's plan.

Murdoch raised the side of his lips. It was just as he aimed.

Normally, there might be board directors that won't ride on Murdoch's plan. But, the recent experience of having their arm chopped of during the previous board meeting has changed their thoughts.

Which means-------the fear of them having to continue accompanying the monster known as Westcott from now on, has won against the fear of opposing against him.

However, even though he managed to get the consensuses of everyone, there were still tons of problems. Simpson made a difficult face.

"……..but, even if *that is the case*, do you have a way?"

That question was normal. For the DEM Company, in order to fix a problem which is expected to be unable to be concluded with peaceful means then, the ones that would execute that on that occasion would be none other than the wizards affiliated with the 2nd executive team even though this method is rarely used.

"The wizards in the 2nd executive team are all Westcott's sympathizers. Mostly likely, no matter how much bait we scatter out, none of them would betray him"

Towards Simpson's words, a white hair board member nodded.

"And even if we managed to get their cooperation……..**she** is always beside Westcott"

She. Just with that simple word, all of the board directors gulped.

Ellen M Mathers. She is Westcott's trusted retainer and also the culprit who chopped of Murdoch and the group's arm off.

Inside the DEM-------no, out of all the humans, she is probably prided as the strongest wizard. As long as she is beside Westcott, But, even though they want to attack Westcott, they could not forget about her existence. Murdoch distorted his lips.

"-----do you all know of the artificial DEM produced satellites, currently on the satellite orbit?"

"What……?"

Simpson raised his eyebrows doubtfully. It was as if he was trying to say, *what are you saying all of a sudden*.

However, Murdoch did not stop to bother and continued on.

"Accurately speaking, there are 23 units. And sooner or late, 8 of them will finish its mission and is in a condition of waiting to be disposed of"

"Wait for a moment. I can't see what you are saying. how is that related to this?"

The board directors made confused expressions on their face. It seems there is still no one that understood him even though he said that much. Murdoch made a fearless smile.

"--------We drop the artificial satellite <DSA-IV> which is planned for disposal onto Tenguu city"

"…….!"

The board directors stiffened their faces in an instant.

But, Simpson swung his head after a while.

“Just when I was thinking what you were going to say…….…are you seriously thinking that is possible? The earth has an atmosphere you know. Something like an artificial satellite would just burn off before even reaching the ground. Even if there are wreck parts left, there is no way you can drop it accurately at the spot Westcott DM is located”

“------Is that really the case”

“What?”

“Let me explain the plan. First off-----“

Simpson dubiously raised his eyebrows. Murdoch *nii* made a grin while continuing.

When he did that, the color of the board member faces changed colors in a blink of an eye. The moment they started hearing Murdoch’s explanation, they probably noticed this plan was not a dream story.

“----That is all. Any questions?”

Murdoch said that, and one of the board directors raised his voice while having sweat flowing down his face.

“…….I see, it’s true this might be possible if we do this. But, won’t this method cause an enormous damage to Tenguu city ”

"That's right! it's true that this might get rid of Westcott but, the damage is too big! Even if this succeeds, how are you going to explain it to the world!"

A bald man raged his voice in agreement. But, that response was within expectations. Murdoch made a leisure nod while replying.

"On an applicable time, we will dispatch one ship in Tenguu city's sky and have it constantly deploy its territory; we will use it to conceal the existence of the artificial satellite from the observation device on the land. And after that, we will have the spacequake alarm ring, and have the surrounding citizens evacuate. Well of course, I don't know how long a shelter made for a spacequake would withstand that"

"Wha……..!"

"Oh what a tragedy. The Tokyo metropolitan Tenguu city was attacked by a grand spacequake again after 30 years. What's more, it is a grand disaster strong enough to blast off the shelter"

He continued on as if he was in a drama

"On top of that tragedy, our firm's MD was there. Aah, how heartbreaking. Losing a genius like him is a very big loss to DEM. But, we cannot keep grieving over it. Let's succeed his dying wish and devote ourselves in advancing DEM Company to a higher growth"

After Murdoch ended his speech by saying that, the faces of the board directors turned pale and looked at Murdoch.

But---------no matter how long it took, there was no one who insisted it was a very inhuman method.

Part 2

"……oou"

1st November. Shidou was tired.

Although he managed to avoid getting reported, Natsumi's harassment continued persistently after that.

On one occasion when he went out shopping, right in the middle of the shopping district, Shidou's attire was transformed into a youthful leather jacket and briefs making him look like a pervert, the nearby pedestrians would report to the police when they saw young girls turning fully naked around Shidou and by the time he returned home, his house was turned into a sex shop decorated with pink neon lights this time. If he did not have < Ratatoskr>'s support, he would not have the slightest idea on how many times he would be obliterated by society.

"Shidou, you don't look energetic, are you okay?"

Tohka then, peeked at Shidou's face uneasily. When he looked carefully, Tohka wasn't the only one, Yoshino, the Yamai sisters, Miku and also Kotori hiding behind the shadows of the pillar too were sending their sights at Shidou.

Shidou swung his head to avoid making everyone worry before sighing.--------even though the one having the hardest time were Tohka and the group who has their body transformed, Shidou would be losing face if he was the one getting tired out.

"Aah, I am okay. Sorry everyone"

"Umu……..I see! It's okay if you are alright"

When Shidou said that, Tohka made a satisfied smile in a relieved manner. He somewhat understood the feeling of a father who has a daughter. *pon* *pon* she nodded her head.

It's true that Natsumi's harassment becomes even worse as day' s passes but, at another perspective, this is a chance.

At the very least, during the time Natsumi was transforming Shidou's clothes and surroundings, she would have to be within < Haniel>'s effective range. Of course, pin pointing where she is was difficult since she can transform into various objects but thanks to that, they could finally see a pattern from analyzing the reiha readings which was occurring these past few days. Right now, the <Ratatoskr> analyst squad starting with Reine was currently placing a net around the Itsuka house as its center. It seems they would be able to catch Natsumi soon.

Rather, the thing that Shidou should be cautiously prioritizing himself with was; Natsumi getting satisfied or maybe bored from harassing Shidou and concealing herself somewhere else.

Like that---------right at that moment.

"……..uh!"

Shidou saw a glitter from outside the window and gasped.

It was the light he saw several times for the past few days.---------it was the sign of <Haniel>'s transforming ability activating.

In the next instant, the Itsuka house interior inside Shidou's view and Tohka and the groups figure; every one of them started glowing and their appearance changed.

And then after a few seconds.

"Wha……."

After looking at everyone's appearance changing completely different from a few seconds ago, Shidou opened his eyes wide astonished.

That's because, the clothes on the small girls in front of him, has turned into leotards that looked like bunny girls with net tights.

Looking carefully, the shape of the ears on their head and of the tails attached onto the leotard's butt. Tohka was dog, Kotori was cat, Yoshino was rabbit, Yamai sisters were monkey, and Miku a cow.

Even under normal circumstances those were lascivious attires and adding on to that, their bodies were currently transformed into those of a child. Somehow, the stinking smell of a crime floating in the air was amazing.

What's more, that was not all.

The familiar living room of the Itsuka house was transformed from the power of <Haniel> into a giant cage like the ones in a zoo, surrounding the girls. Incidentally, Shidou has a gorgeous attire on which often appears in manga, and he was holding a leather whip in his hand.

Naturally, the house walls were removed and they were being exposed to the neighborhood. On top of the cage, a sign board [A zoo belonging only to me] was courteously hanged.

He now looks like an inexcusable pervert.

“Wha-what is this!”

“A-auuu……”

The girls noticed their appearance and their face turned red immediately. Kaguya was the only one [Wait, why am I a monkey?!] roaring unsatisfied. Maybe they were surprised by the sudden light, people from the neighborhood looked towards the [A zoo belongings only to me] and started gossiping about something and was about to call the 110 report number but, Shidou pretended to not look at them and placed his hands on the Incam equipped on his ear.

“Reine-san!”

“…….Aah, I know.-----we captured it. It’s Natsumi’s reading”

“! Really!? Where is she now!?”

“She is around 1 kilometer away from the place you are at------in a building under construction in the town area.”

“1 kilometer away……she done this from that far.”

Shidou faced towards the window (The spot which it used to be at) he saw the light from and muttered.

"Shidou."

Probably guessing what kind of reply would come from looking at Shidou's reaction, Kotori gave a serious look at Shidou while nodding.

"aah……..let's go, everyone!"

Shidou made a big tilt forward with his head as if to reply that.

……somehow looking from the outset, he felt that this scenery was very surreal but, Shidou tried his best to not bother about that.

Part 3

"Fufu-----haha……ahahahahahaha!"

From far away, Natsumi was holding her stomach and rolling around in laughter after seeing Shidou in panic.

She was a beauty around mid twenties and was wearing an Astral Dress with the look of a witch. She has a small face and slender limbs. She was freely twisting that proportion which would make models run away barefooted while having tears at the edge of her eyes and echoing her voice. Natsumi was on top of a half-constructed building 1 kilometer away from the Itsuka house.

She was enjoying peeking at Shidou's reactions from a giant telescope she transformed from a part of a steel frame.

"Ah----, so cute. Take that. I won't forgive you all for living happily after embarrassing me like that"

After saying that, Natsumi sharpened her sights.

Yes. A few days back, Natsumi's unrevealed secret was exposed by that boy, Itsuka Shidou.

She snorted and set the broom type angel------<Haniel> in her hands, upside down.

"Well then……I wonder how and what should I transform next"

After Natsumi distorted her lips, she made a fearless smile. Inside her head, there were many types of harassment ideas popping out.

She would prefer for something that would wear Shidou's mental strength down as much as possible, and completely destroy Shidou's social status. She will make him until he is unable to walk under the sun any more. It might be interesting to scatter Shidou's shirt when he is passing by the police box, giving him a criminal record of obscene exhibition. No, rather why not just-------

That moment, while she was thinking such things and making a very nasty looking face, Natsumi unexpectedly brought her eyebrows closer and lifted her face.

"……..! Something is closing in……..?"

She thought she was mistaken for an instant at first but---------it's true that, there was a presence of something getting closer to Natsumi's direction.

"Don't tell me, Shidou-kun found me……?"

Natsumi clicked her tongue. It was not something impossible. She somewhat has an idea of there being a big organization behind Shidou. Even though if Shidou did not notice her, she could not deny the possibility of a web placed around that area.

"I'm sorry but, I can't have myself get caught here"

Natsumi showed her tongue towards the pursuer which has yet shown itself and straddled onto <Haniel>.

"Fufufufu, See ya"

Ton the same time she kicked the ground, Natsumi's body floated on the air together with <Haniel>. Natsumi then looked far away before, lowering her stance on the broom and flying towards the sky in high-speed.

The surrounding scenery was sucked backwards dizzily. A feeling like her body turning sharp like a drill was controlling her body.

Even though they knew Natsumi's position, it would be meaningless unless there is a human that can catch up to her. Natsumi imagined Shidou's comrade's flustered figures and *kusu **kusu* laughed.

"--------well, I guess this place is good"

Who knows how long has passed after she took flight. Just for pre-cautions, Natsumi flew here and there before landing on an inhabited mountain side.

However, now that there are nets placed around Shidou, it might be a good idea to change her methods a little from now on. Nonetheless, there are a lot of methods. Instead of transforming the objects around Shidou's surrounding, Natsumi would transform herself and play pranks on Shidou. For example, she would transform into a girl who has her clothes forcefully ripped apart and say [Tha-that person did it……!], it would be a one-shot out for Shidou.

"Ahaha, but, I won't let it end like this. I'll take my time slowly-----"

Thus. The moment she said that, Natsumi felt a pressure directly grabbing her heart and jumped backwards.

In the next instant, the place Natsumi was standing at was blasted with light and made a deep hole on the ground.

There was no mistake, that attack was aimed at Natsumi.

"Wha……..!?"

---I was tailed? With that speed!? Natsumi's face was covered with astonishment-------she however, made a fearless smile. She does not have the courtesy to purposely show her discomposure to the opponent.

"……What is this, for Shidou-kun's comrades, that was one stimulating greeting"

She said that and snorted while looking up-----towards the origin of that attack.

When she did that, a floating shadow was looking at Natsumi with a cold gaze while slowly landing to the ground.

It was a girl wearing a silver armor around her body. She has memorable pale blonde hair, and blue eyes. Her face was well-featured like a doll but, it was not a fleeting atmosphere of a lovely lady floating from her body but rather an atmosphere of a strong warrior.

"Too bad, I am not Itsuka Shidou's comrade"

"Fuun……? Is that so. Then the AST? Well, whatever works. Something you need from me?"

"Something you know"

After Natsumi said that, the girl pulled out a giant sword equipped on her back while replying.

"-----<Witch>. I will hunt you"

After Ellen announced that, the opposing Spirit <Witch> opened her eyes wide for an instant, before immediately laughing.

"Hee? Well, I think it's useless.------more importantly, I don't really like that <Witch> name. Will you call me Natsumi properly? "

<Witch>------Natsumi shrugged her shoulders while saying that . Judging from that expression and gesture, it could be perceived that she isn't really that cautious of Ellen. She might have done that to hide her confusion or maybe she really thought it was impossible for her to lose.-------if it was the latter, then Ellen was really looked down upon. Ellen twitched her eyebrows unpleasantly.

"I will know whether it's useless or not once I try"

"Fuun……."

Natsumi pointed the broom she was holding towards Ellen after *Nii* she raised the side of her lips. It was just as recorded in the documents. <Haniel>. An Angel that holds the power to freely change the shape of its target.

It's true that it is an annoying power but------it cannot compare to Ellen. As if to oppose that, Ellen made a stance with the

high-output laser blade <Caledfwlch> she was holding in her right hand.

Ellen and Natsumi's sights blended.

---and, in the timing as if to match with that, a few number of wizards landed behind Ellen. It was the group of DEM wizards that were chasing Natsumi with <Witch>. It seems, they finally have caught up to Natsumi and Ellen.

No, they came following Ellen's signal, that way of saying it is much more appropriate. If they were the only ones chasing Natsumi, then they would probably without mistake lose her.

"You all are late"

After Ellen said that while sending her sights towards Natsumi, the wizards *hii* gasps could be heard.

"I-I am very sorry, Ellen-sama…….!"

"But, we can't keep up with that speed……..."

Ellen made a small sigh from that predicted reply.

To her, the DEM wizards are supposed to be much more experienced compared to many wizards. But even if that is the case, they are *like this* in reality.

After experiencing the mobilization in a group in reality, Ellen fully realize the loss of Takamiya Mana and Jessica Bayley was very big.

"……..I see, now I get what Ike meant"

She said that to herself while patting the large tear scar on her stomach with her left hand. Even though that person could not compare to Ellen in a stand-alone, at the minimum level there is only one person that is fit to work as Ellen's support and it would probably change the success ration of battle plans.

"Executive chief, did you say something……?"

"……nothing. Please focus on the battle"

"! Haaaa……!"

After Ellen said that, the wizards pulled out their weapons they are pleased with at once and directed their sharp sights towards Natsumi.

After looking at that manner, Natsumi however, shrug her shoulders without fear.

"Eeh? Don't tell me the origin of that confidence is from that? Did you think you will win if you come at me alone in numbers?"

Natsumi said that to intimidate them. Ellen twitched her cheeks.

"No. Do not worry. I will not disappoint you"

"Aah, I see. Well, I don't really care but------neh!"

In an instant-----Natsumi sung the <Haniel> she was hanging.

At the same time matching to that action, a gush of wind pressure and reiryoku light attacked Ellen and the wizards lined up behind her.

"----------"

However, after Ellen made a small snort while kicking the ground, she manipulated the territory and flew up to the sky. The Wizards behind too, separated themselves to avoid Natsumi's attack.

"Why you……..!"

The scattered wizards fired several micro missiles at Natsumi . The cylinder filled with killing intent covered with generated Maryoku[9B 1], left white traces in the sky and approached Natsumi.

"Fufun"

But, even though when the rain of missiles with huge power in it was exposed, Natsumi's fearless smile did not disappear. *ton* she hit the ground with the tip of the broom and raised her voice towards the approaching missiles.

"<Haniel>!"

When she did that, <Haniel>'s tip--------the part that looks like a broom was radially opened up and the mirror fixed on it released a very strong light.

"Guh…….!?"

They immediately found out that it wasn't a cunning blind. The moment the missiles approaching Natsumi touched the light released from <Haniels> mirror, they were transformed to countless sweets like candy and chocolate.

"Wha------"

At the same time with the Wizards' dismay, the candy landed nearby and *pon*! Shoot off with a comical sound produced. A sweet fragrant was floating around.

"Oh my oh my, presenting candy to me? I am so happy"

Natsumi *kusu**kusu* giggled before once again hanging < Haniel>.

"Well, I have to repay you all back.------<Haniel>!"

After Natsumi shouted, <Haniel> once again shined and a dazzling light covered the area.

"……..?"

Ellen slightly frowned her eyebrows from the weird feeling attacking her body. It's not like she was bending down but, she felt her sights become a little lower.

At the same time, screams were coming from left and right from the wizards deployed in the area.

"U-uwahhh!?"

"Wha-what is this…….!"

She looked over there by only moving her eyeballs. She confirmed several unfamiliar children there.

No-----wrong. When Ellen looked carefully, she found out all those children had the characteristics of her subordinates. Most likely, they were changed into a child appearance from <Haniel>'s ability.

Ellen lowered her sights towards her right hand holding the laser blade.------it was only normal but, rather than the hand inside Ellen's memory, she confirmed a much more smaller palm there. Just like the other wizards, Ellen was also turned small. It seems the wiring suits also became smaller with her but, the CR-unit size remained the same and because of that, it was oddly unbalanced.

"Ahahahahahaha! That is more cute right?"

Natsumi made an exaggerated laugh by hugging her stomach while laughing.

"The match is still not over."

"Heee? What can you do with that small form? How about going back home and get spoiled by your mother quietly. Fufufufufu"

"……."

Ellen quietly narrowed her eyes. She made an order in her mind and manipulated the Territory. She scanned her own body and confirmed her condition. Muscle mass, bone density, metabolism function, nervous system, various more, she grasped all that in an instant. *I see, it's true that all my abilities has lowered.* Maybe because the muscle strength to move her tongue has regressed too, even her pronunciation was obstructed. It was a very annoying ability.

But.

"--------this is enough. In order to kill you."

After saying that without a lisping tone, Ellen re-gripped <Caledfwlch>'s handle and kicked the sky. She then closed in at Natsumi within an instant.

"Heh----------?"

With her guard lowered, Natsumi let out a dumbfounded voice from Ellen's sudden attack and opened her eyes wide.

Ellen did not care and swung the <Caledfwlch>.

"Eh……, Eh……?"

Natsumi opened her eyes wide in shock while squeezing out that voice from her throat.

---just now, she did not know what has happened.

Natsumi sealed her opponent's power with <Haniel> as usual.

But, within one of them, came one person who came swinging her blade at Natsumi without caring about her.

“Eh, Ah……..”

Her head was in chaos from the situation which has never happened before.

Yes. The moment the girl called Ellen brandished the light sword, a *kaaaa* hot feeling passed through her chest to her stomach-------and Natsumi fell backwards.

Inside her hazy sights, Natsumi slowly placed her hands on the part of her stomach which was hit-----and a scary amount of blood was sticking on to the palm of her hand.

“Hii……..”

The moment Natsumi saw that, an extreme pain which has not still appeared somewhere in her feeling of reality, ran through her body.

---It hurts. It hurts. It hurts. It hurts. It hurts. It hurts. It hurts. It hurts. It hurts. It hurts. It hurts. It hurts ……!!

“A-aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh……..!?”

Natsumi screamed from the extreme pain that she has never felt before until now. It felt like a sharp thorn piercing into her body. Inside her hazy consciousness. Inside her cloudy view. However,

the repeatedly attacking furious stimulation did not allow her to pass out. The cycle of hell kept continuing endlessly.

"No-way……wha, what is this……."

The attack Ellen made by swinging her light sword has caused a deep cut on Natsumi's body together with her Astral Dress. Even though she confirmed that reality in her brain, Natsumi still remained not believing on what had happened.

However, reality will not change whether Natsumi accepts it or not. Fallen down, within Natsumi's view, Ellen holding the light sword was being shown in it.

"-------I see, my power seems to have lowered as expected. To think I would miss the fatal spots at this close distance"

And the moment she said that, Ellen's body gave out a pale glow--------and turned back into her teenage adult years.

Most likely, since Natsumi has gotten damaged, the target with the lowest priorities will have its transformation reverted. In reality, Natsumi's body transformation was still preserved.

"Oh, I turned back to normal"

Ellen opened her left hand and closed it again to confirm her body feeling before, dropping her sights onto Natsumi again.

"Well then, what should I do. Personally I want to capture you alive but, killing you and taking out your Saphira crystal might be good too"

Ellen said that with an indifference in it. Natsumi squeezed her voice out from her throat desperately.

"……,sa……..ve me……., I don't…..want to…..die-----……."

"I don't mind that but, I think that is a choice that will increase your pain even more"

At the same time Ellen said that, the other wizards who has their transformation reverted just like Ellen, grouped together.

"Executive chief. What should we do?"

"Let's bring her back alive. I think she would not go on a rampage with that injury but-----"

Ellen once again re-gripped the handle of the sword while saying that.

"It seems she has an annoying ability so, let's cut off her limbs just in case"

"-----hii…….!?"

After Natsumi gasped, she moved her hands and legs as if to get away from Ellen. But, she can't put in any strength like she wants.

When she was doing that, Ellen slowly raised her sword and-------

"It will end soon. Please do not die mid-way"

Ellen said that in an unconcerned manner and swung down her sword.

"----------!!"

She closed her eyes in reflex and grinded her teeth to withstand the pain that was going to immediately attack her.

Right hand? Left hand? Right leg? Or maybe the left leg……? The pain has not come yet. Even though she opened her eyes to confirm it, she was even scared to move her fingers. But-----

"Wha……"

Natsumi heard Ellen's slightly shocked voice and she opened her eyes timidly.

"Eh…….?"

She then let out a dumbfounded voice from the unexpected scenery.

There was a small girl's back right in front of her. The girl wearing a pale glowing Astral dress, was holding a giant sword which was as big as her, and was protecting Natsumi from Ellen's attack.

She immediately found out she was familiar with that girls appearance.------Yatogami Tohka. She was the girl which was turned into a child because of Natsumi.

"Haaaa!"

Tohka's giant sword swung pass together with a spirited shout. When she did that, Ellen did not resist against that but rather, she jumped backwards to take distance.

Tohka did not lower her guard and glared at Ellen while raising her voice.

"Are you alright!?"

"Wh-why are you……here……."

When Natsumi said that, there were more changes happening in the surroundings as if to match up with her action.

At the same time she heard a melody of valor, the surrounding temperature suddenly dropped and the water in the atmosphere started freezing while producing a crackling sound. The trees and ground nearby and also on the invisible wall around wizards, had thin frost starting to form on them.

"Guh……!?"

"The Territory is freezing ……!?"

"This is getting dangerous! After releasing the Territory, reactivate it and escape to the sky!"

The wizards released their Territory for an instant because it was starting to get frozen and was about to reactivate it immediately.

"Kukuku! That is a good strategy! Well, that would be the normal choice in normal situation!"

"Bad luck. However, that is only a bad move now that we have arrived"

An instant faster than the Wizard reactivating their Territory. Those voices could be heard and a storm occurred nearby, causing the bodies of the Wizards with their defense lost to be easily blown away.

"U-uwah!?"

"Kukakaka! Slow! Too slow!"

"Scorn. How pitiful"

While producing a pleasant laugh and a flat tone voice, the identical twins landed to the ground. They were the Yamai sisters. These girls were also girls that were turned into children because of Natsumi's ability.

"…….!?"

Natsumi's head was now being controlled in a different kind of bewilderment compared to just now.

I don't get it. Why---------the girls who has suffered several types of damages because of Natsumi was now trying to save her.

"Natsumi!"

However Natsumi's thoughts were interrupted the instant she was suddenly called out.

Itsuka Shidou appeared behind her and bends his knees beside Natsumi.

"The blood……! Natsumi! Are you okay!"

"……..Shi-dou……kun..?"

---Why are you too.

She did not say it to the end. Maybe it was because she lost too much blood, she could not put any strength into her body.

"Kuh……, I will have you treated soon……..!"

"------Did you think I would let you?"

Ellen was the one who interrupted Shidou's words. She was the only one in the wizards that was not blown away from the Yamai sisters wind and still had her Territory preserved. It seems she was able to prevent herself from freezing by increasing her Maryoku density.

"<Princess>, <Berserk>, this cold air belongs to <Hermit> I see. And this song------It looks like <Diva> is hiding somewhere. I see, although it might be a surprise attack, it seems this is the reason why the powered down <Princess> was able to fight against me."

Ellen narrowed her eyes while saying that.

"There are 6 Spirits, 5 are in a child state, and the remaining one is heavily injured……..I was told to look around the situation by Issac but, it would be a different story if it was this much of a good opportunity."

Ellen prepared her sword. Shidou opened his mouth while glaring back at her with a sight filled with nervousness.

"……..is it really okay, Ellen-san. Your comrades are out of the count. You are outnumbered."

"Not need to worry about me. I did not count them in the numbers in the first place anyway."

Sweat could be seen flowing down Shidou's cheeks from Ellen's words.

Actually, from Natsumi's perspective, Ellen's superiority was obvious. No matter if Shidou has more numbers than her, Ellen's power was very abnormal.

However, after Shidou licked his lips with his tongue, he shook his throat by shouting.

"I see. I'll use the great numbers without your concern then.-------Miku!"

As if to respond to Shidou's words, the melody tune echoing in the surroundings changed.

The song before was like a marching song to give encouragement to the body and the song this time was elegant and calming; this song had a mysterious charm to it as if a musical note was going into the heart.

"Whatever you do is useless. Something like that won't work on me-------"

"Ahh, it's probably ineffective. **To you** that is"

"What did you say?"

The moment Ellen raised her eyebrows in doubt, the wizards that were blown away to the surroundings all woke up in a weird posture as if they were puppets, and started to group around Ellen .

"Tsk-----"

She clicked her tongue in detest and stepped firmly with one of her legs. When she did that, the invisible wall activated around Ellen expanded and stopped the wizards who were approaching her like a zombie.

But, it seems Shidou had that in his prediction and placed his hands on his ear.

"----------now! Kotori! I'm counting on you for the retrieval!"

The instant Shidou said that, Natsumi felt an odd floating feeling wrapping around her body.

"Wh-wha……"

"Your wound might hurt but, please bear it…….!"

"eh------"

While hearing Shidou's voice, Natsumi felt a pull on her upper body and the feeling of her transformed body turning back to normal-----she then lost consciousness like that.

Part 4

"……..!?"

Inside her own house living room. Origami raised her eyebrows from the sudden odd feeling attacking her body.

When she thought her body started giving out a pale light out without any notice, her height was slowly but certainly getting taller and she return to her previous appearance, which was before she was turned into a child by the Spirit-Natsumi.

"This is……."

To confirm her body senses, she tried gripping her hands and turned her shoulders around. It was very abnormal but it does not look abnormal. It seems she really turned back to normal.

"…….what happened?"

What could have happened? Did Natsumi get bored of playing this game? Or maybe Shidou has found Natsumi and succeeded in persuading her, or the AST was successful in exterminating Natsumi-------she thought up several reasons but, no matter which one it is, this is no mistake this was good news. Origami stood up from the spot.

"Kuh……."

Maybe it was the influence of her body turning back suddenly, just like the dizziness from standing up too fast, her head was getting giddy. She placed her hands on the table and supported her body.

But, that giddiness settled down after a few seconds. She lightly pressed her head while standing up again.

First off was to confirm all the facts. It was essential for her to head over to Shidou and hear about what has happened. Also, it was probably better to confirm if the Spirits has turned back to normal starting with Yatogami Tohka. If they remained as children then, there would be no nuisance entering Origami and Shidou's love nest.

Also, it might be a good idea to show up at the AST Tenguu garrison. Right now, since Origami was currently waiting for her punishment for defying her previous orders, she cannot join in missions but, she could hear the team's situation from her colleague Mikie and the mechanic Mildred. After establishing a plan for now, she pulled the collar of the shirt she was wearing. Since her body turned back to normal while she was wearing clothes meant for children, the size did not match her.

She headed to her room and chose random clothes from her closet. Origami quickly finished changing and headed to the front entrance. But----------Origami twitched her eyebrows at that moment.

The reason was simple. Outside the front entrance, she felt someone's presence.

Origami's mansion has an auto lock installed at its entrance and unless the residence give out the permission, the person is unable to enter the mansion. It was hard to think it was home delivery service or sudden sales. Which means-----

"……."

After Origami hid her body behind the wall without saying anything, she payed attention to the front entrance while pulling out a small automatic gun from her leg holster.

Not long after she did that, *kachari* a sound like that was produced and the door was thrown open, several men then entered the room. But, at that moment, the wire installed at the door was pulled and the tear gas sprayed at the group of men vigorously.

"Guwah!?"

"Wha……..this…….!"

The intruders would never have guessed that a normal mansion would have intruder prevention traps set up. The men raised dismay voices.

Origami brought her eyebrows slightly closer. There were more people than expected. Even if she was to fight them, winning against them in certainty was doubtful.

After making that decision in an instant, Origami crossed the room and exited from the window.

Thinking that this might happen, she installed (Done secretly from the landlord) a simple scaffold on the mansion wall.

"She escaped using the window!"

"Chase her!"

The voices from the group of men could be heard from above. She can't afford to stay here any longer. Origami took out the shoes she hid in the mansion's premise before quickly putting it on and running towards the city.

"They are……"

Who could they be? While escaping, Origami muttered softly and tried searching for the reason in her head. But, she could not think of any violent visitors that would suddenly intrude her house.

Thus, after she thought of that, the cell phone in her pocket started to vibrate.

After searching for her cell phone in her pocket with her hand and taking it out while paying attention to not drop her speed, she found out the name [Kusakabe Ryouko] was being displayed on the screen. It was the name of the AST captain Origami was affiliated with.

She then pressed the call button and placed the cell phone up to her ear, and could hear a familiar voice immediately.

"Hello are you there, Origami?"

"What?"

When Origami answered her while running, Ryouko gasped as if she guessed Origami's situation.

"Origami, don't tell me you are running right now?"

"…….. How do you know that?"

When Origami asked shortly, Ryouko kept quiet for a while before continuing her words with difficulties.

"Calm down and listen to me.-----Your disciplinary punishment has been decided"

"…….Uh"

Origami gasped at Ryouko's gloomy words.

But, Origami understood everything from that one sentence. The men that intruded just now, were agents dispatched to capture Origami. She heard that problematic targets will be captured so that they will not resist before the punishment could be told.

Last month Origami used the prohibited annihilation armor < White Licorice> to protect Shidou, and attacked their friendly

troops, the DEM team. Until that matter is fixed, she was prohibited to join in any AST missions.

But that matter has the basis of the DEM going overboard and there are some in the upper-ranks that gave out opinions of sympathy for Origami. Then why would------

As if she guessed Origami's thoughts, Ryouko continued her words.

"……This matter was decided to be scrapped away as a special case because of many opinions from a great number of people. But, now you are going to be dealt with a punishment.------there is no mistake there is some kind of power moving"

"……DEM"

"……."

Ryouko did not answer-------that silence has confirmed it.

"-------anyways. I am going to try negotiating with the superiors now. Right now-----"

"Found her! Over here!"

And, at that moment, a man appeared in the street in front of her and blocked Origami's path. It was hard to think how he arrived there before her. Most likely, there was another team from the start.

"……."

She entered a side road since she had no choice but--------it was a dead end. She immediately turned her back to the wall and was cornered. “You sure caused us some trouble, Master sergeant Tobiichi. Your punishment has been decided. We will have you follow us."

The male leader walked out and said that to Origami while glaring at her. Origami did not answer to him and looked at the surrounding situation by moving her eyes. Front, back, up, left and right-----however, she couldn't find any escape route from this number of people.

He might have guessed that, the male leader snorted.

“It’s useless. Stay down.”

“kuh……..”

After Origami glared at the man in detest, the cell phone she was holding suddenly started vibrating.-------it was an incoming call. It seems, when she was running away from the group of men just now, she accidentally cut off the call. It should be Ryouko calling her back.

Maybe, she would be able to gain new information. Origami glared at the men without lowering her guard, while fumbling her hand to the call button without looking at the screen and pressed it before bringing her phone to her ears.

But.

"------Hello? Is there any mistake that this is the cell phone of Master sergeant Tobiichi Origami?"

What she heard from the receiver of the phone was a much unexpected voice.

"……Ellen Mathers…….?"

Origami called out that name while bringing her eyebrows together. Ellen. DEM Company's Wizard.

After hearing that name, the men slightly moved their eyebrows .

"What do you want?"

"Please don't be so unkind. Master sergeant Tobiichi."

Maybe she felt a little sharpness inside Origami's voice, so Ellen said that.

But, right now, Origami was going to lose her power by the hands of DEM. Not having any hostility to her is asking for the impossible.

Before even that, a few days ago, Origami recently just crossed blades with Ellen at the DEM HQ building. Although the difference in strength was clear-----Origami has also landed one hit on Ellen. At the very least, there is no way she would hold any good thoughts towards Origami too.

However, Ellen did not show any hostility towards Origami and continued talking in a very businesslike tone.

"I am going to be straightforward with you.-----Master sergeant Tobiichi. Will you work under me?"

"……what do you mean?"

Origami raised her eyebrows doubtfully from those unexpected words.

"Just like what I said. Will you join the DEM industry's second executive team? I promise you better treatment---- more than any before in various kinds of ways."

"----------I do not plan to lend a hand to an organization that would harm Shidou."

"If that is the case, then don't worry. Regarding Itsuka Shidou , we do not plan to actively attack him for the mean time."

"…….Do you think I will believe you?"

When Origami said that, Ellen made a small sigh.

"I see. How regretful. But, is that really okay? It seems, you are standing in a predicament. If you are caught now, it would mean that you will lose your powers to go against the Spirits for eternity."

"……!"

Origami sharpened her sights from Ellen's words.------she knows Origami's current situation.

Everything connected in an instant. The reason why Origami's punishment was decided was because DEM intervened.

"……..you don't have any resentment towards me for getting injured by me?"

"I won't say there is none. But the desire of wanting a useful subordinate has won against that now. -----And one that is strong enough to land a hit on my body."

"……"

Of course, Origami's expression could not be sent to the other side of the receiver, but Ellen continued on as if she saw through Origami's reaction.

"Inside DEM industry, there exists many powerful CR-units that could not be compared to the ones deployed to many nations.--------Don't you want to clear your parents regrets?"

"……uh"

It seems Origami's past has been investigated. Origami leaked a breath unpleasantly.

But, Origami was made to stop her unpleasant voice from the next word Ellen said.

"----5 years ago, a great fire attacked the Tenguu Nankou town . At that time, there were several Reiha spotted on the spot. Naturally, that information is DEM's top secret but--------if you become a wizard in the second executive team then, I would not mind disclosing that to you"

"Wha----------"

She opened her eyes wide and gasped.

Several Reiha readings. Those words supported Shidou's claims .

Shidou's sister <Efreet>- Itsuka Kotori. Origami has chased that fire spirit for her parent's revenge.

But, Shidou said there was another Spirit existing at that spot during that time------and said that Kotori was not the target for revenge for her parents. And as if to match up with that, the man standing in front of her, let out an irritated voice.

"What are you talking from just now?! Never mind already, catch her!"

Listening to the leader's order, the group of men filled in the distance as if to surround Origami.

"Kuh-------"

"----------well. How about it? Tobiichi Origami."

"……., ……"

After a few seconds of silence.-----Origami voiced out her conclusion.

"--------I understand. Give me power."

And at that moment.

"Guh……..!?"

"Kuh, ah---------"

The group of men, who filled in the gaps between Origami to capture her, all let out a painful groan at once and started collapsing to the ground.

"This is……."

When Origami raised her eyebrows, one Nordic blonde girl pressing a cell phone onto her ears slowly walked from behind the collapsed group of men.

She then extended her hands towards Origami.

"----------Welcome, to DEM industry"

From the front and her phone receiver.

Ellen Mather's voice shook Origami's eardrum.

Chapter 8: Transform Makeup

Part 1

"-------I heard Natsumi woke up!?"

The door opened and Shidou raised his voice.

It was in a corner of an underground facility in the city owned by <Ratatoskr>. Inside the room, it was made just like the < Fraxinus> bridge; there were many gauges and giant monitor installed in it.

"Aah, that was fast, Shidou"

And as if to respond to Shidou's voice, a chair placed in the center of the room turned around and the girl sitting on it faced towards him.--------it's Kotori. When Natsumi lost consciousness, < Haniel>'s transformation ability was released and Kotori turned back to the appearance just like the one inside Shidou's memories.

No----If it were to be said more specifically, it is a little different. Shidou tilted his head in confusion.

"Hn…….? Kotori, what's with that face?"

When he looked carefully, he saw pale red lines on Kotori's face . Yes, it was like she was scratched by a cat.

Kotori [Ahh……] scratched her cheek before, […… well, Shidou please be careful] saying that.

"No, from what……..whatever, more importantly where is Natsumi? She woke up right?"

"Yes, follow me.---------over here"

Shidou left the room while being urged by Kotori and *Kaka* systematic footsteps sounds echoed in the corridor which has a wider width than <Fraxinus>.

This was the first time he came here but, the facility looks like it was made like the place he used during the time he pinned down Natsumi's identity a few days ago. It seems <Ratatoksr> possess several facilities like this in order to prepare for various situations.

A few days ago, after Kotori and the girls picked up Natsumi with the <Fraxinus>, she was immediately moved to this facility and went through examinations and treatment. It was hard to say that the wound she got from Ellen was light by any standard but, luckily it was not something life-threatening.

"------There's that problem with Ellen and we really want to keep her in the <Fraxinus> but……..as expected, there is no way we can leave a Spirit that has not gotten sealed yet there"

While walking through the corridor, Kotori said that while taking a glance at Shidou.

That was only normal. If a full powered Spirit went on a rampage inside, no matter how quarantined the area was, it would not last a second.

"Here."

Kotori suddenly stopped. Right in front of them, he saw a solid door there.

Kotori then input the number on the terminal installed beside the door with familiar movements and hit her hand on it. When she did that, a digital rhythmical tone was produced and the door slid open.

"Go on, Shidou."

"Aah……."

Kotori urged him and he entered.

There was a wide space behind the door. There were several types of machines lined up inside the dim room and inside the middle, a solid looking glass dividing the room could be seen there . It's made quite similarly to the quarantine space Kotori was in when she had her powers back inside <Fraxinus>.

And on top of the bed placed inside, there was one girl distorting her face unhappily and playing with a doll while sitting down.

"……Natsumi"

Shidou quietly called her name.

Her head was covered with bed hair, and has unhealthy pale white skin. Her back was low and her arms and legs were thin like branches.

That girl was sitting on the bed while wearing a hospital gown. For an instant, Shidou saw Natsumi as a patient who has a serious disease and has little time left to live with.

She looks like, but at the same time does not look like the Spirit-Natsumi, Shidou and the girls saved yesterday. But, Shidou knew about this. That appearance he is seeing through the glass is Natsumi's real form.

"----------I think you know this but"

Kotori moved the Chupa chups inside her mouth around while saying that.

"Please be careful. It seems she temporarily can't use her angel because of the damage she got from Ellen but, the opponent is a spirit. What's more, at the current point her impression value towards Shidou is at its worst."

"aah……..but, there won't be any meaning if I don't talk right?"

"Just like you say. Unless Natsumi opens her heart to Shidou, it would be impossible to seal Natsumi's powers. I won't ask you to make her fall for you, but please get some kind of clue. That's because this is a big chance."

"Big chance?"

When Shidou asked in wonder, Kotori unnaturally shrugged her shoulders.

"Well it's obvious isn't it? She is heavily injured and can't use her power freely. What's more, she is now being confined in a place she doesn't know. Even if she acts brave, she would at least feel a little anxious. If Shidou fixes that then the possibility of her affection point increasing is high."

"I wonder if it would go that well……..I would be cautious if it was me."

"Well yeah. But, tentatively, you are the hero who risked your life to save Natsumi. She probably won't be that hard-hearted."

"It'll be nice if that is the case."

After lightly arranging his breathing, Shidou [I'm going now] said that to Kotori and placed his hands on the entrance of the room which was separated with a glass.

He slowly opened the door and entered inside. The transparent wall seen from the outside, looks like a normal white from the interior side. Other than a bed, there were also cupboards and a table placed inside the room. Incidentally, there were various entertainment goods prepared and it could be inferred that < Ratatoskr> has put in a lot of painful hard-work to not let Natsumi get bored.

"……!"

The moment Shidou entered the room, Natsumi who was on the bed twitched her shoulders.

"Yo-yo…….Natsumi"

Shidou tried his best to make a smiling face and greeted her. However, rather than replying back to the greeting, Natsumi immediately started throwing objects near her hands like the toys, pillow and cushion on her bed.

"……..! ……!"

"Wah……wait! That's dangerous Natsumi!"

"Do……Lo……re……!"

"Eh?"

No matter what Natsumi said, it could not be heard properly. He raised his eyebrows and asked back.

"Don't……..look……here!"

"Eh, no, why……"

After Shidou tilted his head, a panda doll flew to him and took a clean hit on his face.

"Hepu!?"

"…….!"

But, that panda doll was the last ammo. Realizing that she has nothing on the bed to throw, Natsumi panicked for a while before, crawling into the bed cover.

She squirmed around for a few seconds before, bringing only her eyes out and glared at Shidou. It's as if she was a sniper wearing a Ghillie suit lurking in the thicket.

"Wha…….what do you want…….!"

While glaring at Shidou with a sight filled with hostility, Natsumi said that.

"No, I just want to talk with you a little……."

"I have nothing to talk about……! Ge-get out!"

"Do-don't say something like that. Is your wound okay?"

"uu……."

When Shidou said that, Natsumi hesitated to talk awkwardly.

And after a few seconds of silence, she continued her words.

"……why……did you help. Me"

"You ask why……..well that's because, you were beaten up by Ellen……."

"I don't mean that!"

When Shidou replied her, Natsumi interrupted Shidou's words by shouting.

"I-i……..didn't I disguised myself as you, erased your comrades……..and did only bad things to you! Why……why did you save me?! You! And your comrades too……..!"

After saying that, Natsumi *pii* pointed at Shidou with her finger. Shidou folded his arms before making a tired sigh.

"Aah……..I seriously give up to that. As expected even my innards got cold. Will you stop that?"

"Like I said…….!"

Natsumi said that in irritation. Shidou was in thoughts for an instant but, he immediately *pon* hit his hand.

"Ah, I see. You have to apologize to everyone properly okay?"

"Aaah, Moouu…….!"

Natsumi swung her hands around inside the bed cover. Dust flew out nearby. It seems she wasn't that happy with Shidou's reply.

But to Shidou, he would only get troubled if he was asked something like [Why did you save me?]. He scratched the back of his head while, replying back:

"Even if you tell me that……..if I come across an event like that, I have no choice but to save you right?"

"Do……don't joke with me! There is no way that is right! Just say it! What is your goal!? Just what kind of self-interest do you have until you would save the criminal that was causing trouble to yourself?!"

"…….no, well, how should I say this? It's true that I received a lot of pain but……..when I talk to spirits, although the level is different, I would usually face the same kind of thing. Look, there's Tohka and Yoshino right? I think you would know this already but, they are spirits just like you. Honestly speaking, I was close to dying several times already you know?"

"Di-dying…….?"

"Aah. I would be shot with beams without any reservation, and the city was almost close to being frozen"

"Ha……haaah!?"

"I seriously was close to being eaten and there was a time I was almost close to becoming cinders."

"Eh…….ehh?"

"Next there was a time I was almost blown away by an attacking typhoon……aah, speaking about a recent event, as expected it was a close call when everyone in the city got brainwashed and came attacking me all at once."

"……..."

Coming from the gap of the bed cover, Natsumi opened her eyes wide as if she heard something unbelievable. Shidou made a wry smile while continuing.

"So……..how should I say this, as long there is someone getting hurt, although I can't say don't worry about it, Tohka and the girls would reflect on those actions, overcome it, and is living like that right now. If that is the case, there is no reason you can't do that too right?"

After Shidou said that, Natsumi became silent for a while before , snorting roughly.

"Wha-what is with that……you thought you said something cool?"

"No, It's……"

Not like that, he could not finish that line. He scratched his cheeks while talking to Natsumi again.

"More importantly, I have one question, are you okay with that ?"

"……what?"

After taking enough time, Natsumi replied back. Nonetheless, it 's great itself that she didn't refuse point-blank. Shidou made a small nod before asking his question.

"The reason why you disguised as me and erased everyone. Why did you do something like that?"

"……..!"

When Shidou asked, Natsumi glared back at him from the gap of the bed.

"That's because……isn't it obvious that you saw my secret during that time……!"

"Secret…….by that you mean?"

"I-Isn't it obvious……..that it's my real appearance!"

"Huh……? Wai-wait a second. Why would you have motives once your appearance is seen!?"

Natsumi replied back by shouting while having tearful eyes. When she did that, Natsumi gritted her teeth before continuing.

"What……did you say……..? Ha-have a limit even for jokes! Isn't it obvious from looking! After looking at a shabby appearance like this……there is no way you can remain calm!? Or what is it? Is it your goal to make me say that with my mouth!?"

Natsumi shouted hysterically, and *Pofu**pofu* hit the top of the bed. Shidou did not really get it but, it seems that event was something lethal to Natsumi. While getting blood-shot eyes, she continued on her agitated manner.

"The atmosphere was quite good when I first met you right? You said I was beautiful right? But why is that? That's because I was in that Onee-san appearance right!? If I was like this in the beginning, would you have that reaction? You won't right? There is no way you would be nervous right? If that is the case then, you would just ignore me even if I talk to you right!?"

"Som-something like that……."

"Thaaaaaatt issssssss impossssibleeeeeeeee! Currently------the people over here, if [I] remain as [I], then no one would bother about me……!"

"Natsumi……?"

For an instant, Shidou felt the tone of her words turned sadder suddenly and brought his eyebrows together.

But immediately, Natsumi once again sharpened her sights.

"Anyway! I, i will not forgive anyone in this world who knows my real appearance……!"

After saying that, she once again put the disarranged bed cover back on.

As if he was overpowered by Natsumi's vigor, Shidou took one step back and collected Natsumi's words in his head.

The thing is……Natsumi seems to hate her real appearance very much. Because of that, she transformed her own body using <Haniel>'s ability into her idealistic onee-san……..that's it then.

Looking only at that composition, it was no difference from an old-fashion witch heroine. ……well, for Natsumi's case, it seems her disgust towards her real appearance has a remarkable difference.

But, even when he understood that, Shidou has yet points he did not understand.

The problem was simple. That's----------

"Uuuuun……..but Natsumi. Is your current appearance really that disappointing?"

It's true that her hair is messy and although it is hard to call it flattery or healthy but, he felt that Natsumi does not look that bad until self-depreciation. If she would neaten up a bit then her level would be cute enough.

However, Natsumi sent back her sights baring hostility towards Shidou's words.

"Saying something like that…….! I will not get fooled! I will not get fooled!"

"No, I am not fooling you. Let me see your face clearly a bit."

After saying that, Shidou slowly walked over the bed and placed his hands on the bed cover covering Natsumi.

"! Hnnn! Hnnnnnn!"

Natsumi struggled, and tried resisting but--------maybe because the wounds hurt her, she immediately turned quiet and Shidou pulled off the bed cover.

"……!"

Natsumi's face turned red while closing her eyes tightly, and shrank her body.

It's true that she does not have the sensual and sexy charm of the adult version Natsumi but, if she were to clean up her appearance then, she would probably change into a wonderful lady.

"Hn, like I guessed. Don't talk bad about yourself. The current you properly has the charms that the current you only has."

"What……..! Don't say it like you know……!"

Natsumi made a face full with hatred but, *Jiii* she stared back at Shidou's face. Natsumi stopped her words and averted her eyes in a troubled manner.

And after a while of silence, Natsumi opened her small mouth.

"……..Really? Is……is it really okay for me to remain like this?"

"Aah, really."

After Shidou made a strong nod, he extended his hands towards Natsumi as if he was reaching out to her.

"That's why; apologize to everyone properly with that appearance, and with your words. It's okay. Everyone will understand. If you do that------you should be able to be friends with everyone."

"……fri..end"

"Aah"

Natsumi looked downwards in a manner as if she has no idea what to do but, soon in a timid manner, she extended her hand towards Shidou's hand. But, the moment when both of their hands were about to touch.

Natsumi turned her palms around and *Piii* erected her middle finger.

"-------wait, I won't be fooled by those words! Iddiooooot!"

She then said that with a loud voice.

"heh……..?"

"Frieeeeend? You are just going to say that and once I'm fooled, you'll make me as a target of ridicule right!? *Uwah, she really took*

those words seriously, what an idiot! Something like that.. you'll say that and cackle right!? You probably have a panel with the word [Shock] written on it right!? I get it! I get it so!"

"N-no……...Natsumi?"

He took a step back as if he was over-pressured by Natsumi. But rather than calming down, Natsumi was heating up.

"*This ugly girl getting all that confident after wearing the skin of a beautiful Onee-san, how disgusting!* You are thinking something like that right!? I get it even if you didn't say shit! In this whole world, I know myself the best that I am a hopeless trash! But, I can't help it! What the hell can I do?!"

"Ca-calm down, Natsumi! No one is thinking like----------"

"Shut upppppppppppppp! For a nice guy like you it's obvious that you would secretively say bad things about others behind their backs and post vilification in the SNS! You would post with a photo attached and it would be like, *I saw this ugly girl today and I seriously felt sick.* Am I right?! Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahh! Just die die die die die die dieeeeeeeeeeeee! I will get you flooded with spamss! I will put a GyotakuI [9C 1] on you and expose you in a giant BBS and corner you until you get kicked out of schooooooll!!!!!"

"Aren't you a little too clear about modern day society!?"

Shidou made a comeback in reflex but, now wasn't the time for that. He then tried to calm Natsumi who was raging.

"An-anyway, just calm down. Wha!? Come on, take one big breath……."

"Ugaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!"

However, it was useless. The agitated Natsumi swung both her hands around and-------she then prepared her fingernails and, * gariii* scratched Shidou's face.

"……."

"That's why I told you to be careful"

After Shidou exited Natsumi's room, Kotori who has the same scratch mark made on her face like Shidou said that while shrugging her shoulders. It seems, Kotori was also scratched by Natsumi just like him.

"……..I'll ask just in case but, how is the mental state?"

"There were some ups and downs but, it's not in a level that a seal can be placed."

"Yeahhhh……."

Shidou was patting his scratched face which was still in pain while looking over to the quarantine room divided by an invisible

wall. Maybe she calmed down a little thanks to Shidou leaving; Natsumi arranged her breathing and got off her bed slowly before collecting the pillows and doll she threw just now.

From what could be seen, it was a normal action. However in Shidou's perspective, the aim for picking them up wasn't to keep things tidy but rather, it looked like she was replenishing her ammo for intercepting another person if they entered the room.

"It seems she does not have any confidence in her real appearance. We have to fix that complex somehow or else, even if we manage to seal her Reiryoku, a counter-flow would occur."

Kotori said that difficultly while placing her hands on her chin.

Actually, it was just as Kotori says. By some chance Natsumi's power was sealed, Natsumi would not be able to use her transformation ability. Of course----------not only would she be unable to become that onee-san, she will have to live her life using her real appearance like that. Judging from Natsumi's current state ……..that would be extremely hard for her.

"But, we can't take our time with this. We have a time limit."

"Time limit?"

When Shidou asked, Kotori nodded and [Isn't it obvious] said that.

"Right now, the reason why Natsumi is keeping quiet is because the damage she received from Ellen is not healed yet. If

her body is healed up to the point she is able to use her angel freely, then she would probably run away immediately."

"Ah…….I see. If you think about it that way, how long is the postponement?"

When he said that, Kotori made two fingers stand making a peace sign.

"From Reine's diagnosis, the longest we have is around 2 days. We have to somehow make Natsumi open up within that 2 days interval."

"Uuun……."

Shidou folded his arms while bringing his eyebrows together and immersed himself in thoughts.

There is no time. On top of that, Natsumi was currently in a situation where she hates having even a decent conversation with them. As expected, first off, they have to somehow soften that strong complex of hers------

"…….ah."

At that moment, Shidou thought of a certain idea, and *pon* hit his hands.

"Hey Kotori. I don't know if this would work well but, how about this?"

"..What kind?"

Kotori raised one eye brow while tilting her head. Shidou gave a brief explanation of his idea to her.

"Fumu……..I see."

After he did that, Kotori placed her hand on her chin and made the rod of the Chupa chups she was eating stand up.

"Okay. We don't have any other effective methods anyway so let's try that. <Ratatoskr(We)> will prepare everything you need"

"Aah, I am counting on you. I'll ask everyone if I can have them help out."

"Yes, I'll ask you for that.----------We'll carry out the plan tomorrow. We will commence the next plan after Natsumi finished her breakfast."

"Ou. Don't over sleep."

"You too."

After Kotori said that, she interposed the chupa chups with her fingers and *nii* raised the side of her lips.

"Well then-------Let our war(Date) begin"

Part 2

"Hnnn……."

Next morning. After Natsumi woke up, she found out there was a nice smell floating in the room.

She immediately knew where the smell was coming from. A part of the wall changed and turned into something like a table, with breakfast being placed on top of it. Grouped together was bacon, eggs, 2 bread rolls and soup along with a salad. There was steam coming out from the soup and the bacon was still giving out *crackle* sounds. She found out it was not something ready-made but something that was just cooked.

It seems a part of the wall is convertible into opening and closing, and was made to allow putting the food into the room through that. Yesterday for lunch and dinner, they were prepared in the room before Natsumi noticed.

"……"

After Natsumi moved towards the tray, she cautiously took a deep sniff of the food placed on the plate before timidly starting to move it into her mouth.

The delicious grease from the juicy bacon and the mild taste of the egg mixed together complexly in her mouth. Natsumi relaxed her cheeks-------and *puun**puun* swung her head to resist.

"Damn……why is it so delicious……."

She muttered that in regret while eating the food.

Natsumi stuffed her cheeks with the bread filled with jam on top while looking around at the room she was trapped in once again.

There was a bed, table, and television. Almost every other thing necessary for living was present there. What's more, food or sweets would be automatically rationed without even meeting with anyone else. In a way, this is the best environment.

But--------She cannot stay here forever. Natsumi stroke the wound on her stomach while grinding her teeth.

She has no idea what kind of goals Shidou and Kotori has but, it was not hard to imagine that it would be something not beneficial to Natsumi. Using some kind of method, it has to be revenge towards Natsumi. It might be they were trying to fatten her up before eating her. If that was the case then, there is no reason why they would give such delicious food to Natsumi.

"I won't let it go your way…….!"

The wound she got from Ellen was healing all right. If things go well, she would probably heal enough until she is able to manifest <Haniel> in a few days' time. If that happens then, the wall of this room would be exactly like the term paper-thin. It's better to escape as fast as possible.

Tentatively, she can choose to run to the neighbor world by getting lost but; not only was will her body be burdened when moving between worlds-------there is a possibility that she would

get pulled back to this world right after she returned back to the neighbor world. If possible, that's something she does not want to do.

Even though the likelihood is low, if by any chance she was pulled over here and during that time, she bumped into the Wizard called Ellen, she would definitely be killed this time.

Anyways, right now her highest priority is to think about healing her body and acquiring some energy. Thinking like that, Natsumi took the remaining food and threw it in her mouth.

And, at that moment.

When the room door suddenly opened, several human shadows entered the room and surrounded Natsumi in an instant.

“Eh……..!?”

She was surprised by the sudden event and leaked out a hysteric voice out from her throat.

When she looked at her surroundings in panic, she found out every one of them were familiar faces.

Shidou and Kotori. And also, Tohka, Yoshino who were chosen as her suspect candidates.

Obviously for Kotori; Tohka too who was full with pride while blessed with that appearance and Yoshino who pulls in the intentions of male with that timid behavior were the type of girls Natsumi hated.

But, that wasn't the problem now. Every one of them surrounding Natsumi was, for some reason, carrying ropes and a big sack with them.

"Wha-wha……what!?"

Being surrounded in four sides, when Natsumi released a voice filled with confusion, Kotori *Pii*! Pointed her fingers towards Natsumi.

"Capture her!"

"""Ooou!!"""

Matching with Kotori's orders, Shidou, Tohka, and Yoshino moved at the same time.

*Bassaa*she was made to wear the sack from behind and her sights turned pure black. Next off, at the same time with Kotori's order echoing, this time coming from the top of the sack, her body was coiled up with the rope.

"Hnn! Hnnnnnnnnnn!?"

Even though she struggled, it was useless. Her hands and legs were tied with the rope tightly and she could not even move it. The only thing Natsumi could do was to twist and turn her body like a earless seal that was just washed ashore on the beach.

And immediately, her body was elevated and carry up by someone.

"So, Kotori. What should we do next?"

"Yeah, bring her over here like that."

"Umu, I get it!"

After hearing that conversation through the thick sack, Tohka who was carrying Natsumi started to move.

---I am being brought somewhere!? The worst of imaginations ran wild in Natsumi's mind. ***Will I be on top of a chopping board once the sack is taken off……..!?*** Or maybe, ***I might be thrown into a boiling hotpot with the sack on!?***

"I! I! I-If you eat me, your stomach will break!"

However, Tohka who was carrying Natsumi did not even twitch. The sound of sways resounded to her and it was telling Natsumi that she was gradually reaching the targeted place.

After how long has passed since then, Natsumi got tired of shouting and when she started to leave her body lifeless on Tohka' s shoulder, Tohka suddenly stopped and slowly lowered Natsumi on the spot.

The rope and sack was taken off next. A soft light flew towards Natsumi's eyes which has gotten used to the dark.

"Uu……."

While making a shadow on her face with her hand, she waited for her eyes to get used to it and------Natsumi *pokan* opened her mouth from the unexpected scenery that unfolded.

"Wha-what, is this……"

Over there, she was not on top of a giant chopping board nor was she on top of a boiling hotpot of hell.

Inside the room shined by lines of warm light, there was one bed fit for one person to lie down and there were slight scents of flowers floating nearby. It was a calm space enough to be anti-climactic.

When Natsumi was being blank, a girl wearing a nurse outfit standing beside the bed swung her small hand.

"Okaay, a one-day limited beauty salon, welcome to [Salon do Miku]"

After saying that, the girl gave her a smile. It was a face she knew. Her name should be------Izayoi Miku. Her selfishly voluptuous breasts were ostentatiously dangling. She was a type of girl Natsumi hates.

"Wai-wait a second, what is this……?"

"What do you mean by what? Didn't Miku say that just now? It's a beauty salon. We're going to have you get a skin care."

"……..!?"

Shidou's reply was clear but, Natsumi got even more unnecessarily confused.

"Wait a second. I don't understand. Why--------"

At that moment, Natsumi suddenly twitched her shoulders. She got an idea of Shidou and the girl's real motives.

"Ha……..haha…….I see…….after making me do something like this, you all were going to laugh at the humorous appearance of an ugly girl in a misunderstanding? Ahaha……..You people sure have one heck of a hobby. Having the same rotten character like me……"

"Touu!"

"Ouch!"

In the middle of Natsumi's words, Kotori gave a chop on her head. She groaned after pressing her head in reflex.

"What was that for?!"

"Other than that appearance, we have to do something about that negative persecution complex. Anyways, hurry up and lie down. We are pressed for time."

"I don't want to……..! Why should I do that even though I know I will be laughed at……!"

"Oh you……."

Kotori sighed while scratching her head. And at that moment, Shidou placed his hands on Kotori's shoulders.

"Well Natsumi, how about this? For today, we will use the methods we thought off and show you we can [Transform] you. If that succeeds then it is my win. We want you to listen to what we have to say face to face.------but, if you think nothing has changed at all then, we will lose. You can do whatever you want later."

"……whatever I like, what do you mean?"

"Let's see……..for the time being, how about letting you run away to a place you like?"

"……..!"

Natsumi opened her eyes wide at Shidou's words. That plan was very unexpected for Kotori but, Kotori poked Shidou's elbow.

"Hey, Shidou.."

"Why not? We have no other methods.------how about it, Natsumi? I think it doesn't sound bad."

"……."

Natsumi narrowed her eyes to find Shidou's intentions.

In any case, once her body recovers, she can run away using < Haniel>. But, as long as there are spirits like Tohka and Yoshino beside Shidou and the group, she can't deny that there is a possibility they might hinder her.

Also, the challenge was not a challenge at all. No matter how hard they try, it is impossible to do something about this shabby appearance. It is irritating that she will be laughed at once she follows the cajolery of her opponent but, she felt that if she was able to run away safely, then it isn't a bad deal.

"……I understand. Then it's okay."

"I see.---------then for now, please follow Miku's instructions."

"……"

Natsumi glared at Shidou silently. But, Shidou did not falter even for a bit and send his sights back at her.

"Think about it, Natsumi."

"……..huh? About what?"

"--------About the fact that a girl can [Transform] without using an Angel."

"…….uh"

That manner of speaking pissed her off very much, Natsumi * pui* looked away from Shidou's face.

"-----alright, I'll leave this to you Miku."

"Okay okay. Leave it to mee"

Shidou made a small swing with his hand and went outside through the door deep inside the room. When he did that, Miku turned her body around and crawled her sights on Natsumi's body.

"Alright, let's begin. For the time being, please take off the clothes you are wearing right now."

After saying that, Miku repeatedly opened and closed both her hands while approaching her. For some reason, she felt that the shine in her eyes were different if compared to when Shidou was here.

"Eh……no……"

Natsumi stepped back unintentionally. Even in death, she will not show her seedy-looking body to this girl whose breasts are like a Holstein's----more importantly, she sensed a danger to her body with her instinct.

But, Kotori who was standing-by behind her, *gaaa* grabbed her shoulders and she lost her movement.

"Wai……..!"

"You don't know when to give up seriously. Please keep quiet."

"It's going to be okay. It won't hurt."

"Kyaa! Kyaaa!"

Miku's breathing gotten heavier while stripping off Natsumi's hospital gown. Natsumi struggled but, the resistance was futile and she was turned naked without a single thread of string on her before she was to lay her body downwards onto the bed.

"Wha-what are you planning to do……..!?"

"Uufufu, I did get scared a lot thanks to you. I will properly have my pay back okay?"

After Miku said that, she made a grin and took a bottle placed on the shelf before starting to smear that strange liquid inside that bottle on Natsumi's back.

"Kyaaaaaa! What!? What are you doing!?"

"Come on, don't struggle. It's the best grade of aroma oil you know."

Miku moved her fingers while gently brushing Natsumi's skin.

"Ah……afuu……"

Towards a new sensation she has not experienced before, weird voices could be heard leaking out from Natsumi's throat.

"Ufufu, it feels nice right? As expected, it isn't in a pro's level but, I am quite good at this. It is no good you know? You have to treat your skin properly"

"Ev-even if you……..tell me that……."

"First, it seems you say you have no confidence in yourself but, there is no way I could be convinced if you told me that after not putting in any effort. Well, there are natural born beauties like Tohka-san in this world but, all the girls you are jealous off in this world has worked hard to try to become beautiful."

"That's because, no matter what I do……"

While saying that, Natsumi felt her consciousness getting hazy. Maybe because of the accumulated fatigue on her body or maybe it 's because of Miku's massage feeling too comfortable, a sudden urge of sleep attacked her.

"I……"

At the end of those words. Natsumi fell asleep.

"-----Okay! Done and done!"

"…….!"

Because of Miku's voice, Natsumi immediately woke up.

Wondering of when she changed her body position, she was right now sleeping on the bed facing upwards. Tentatively, there is

a bath towel placed on her chest but, it was somewhat embarrassing.

"How is it? What's your impression?"

"Eh……..er"

Asked by Miku, Natsumi lightly brushed her own skin.

And then-------she opened her eyes wide in astonishment.

"! Wha-what, is this……?"

It was unexpectedly unbelievable. Her dry skin has turned fresh like a baby's skin.

"Ufufu. Every one that first experiences a beauty salon gets surprised. Well, of course, that condition will not go on forever but , it is deeply moving as expected."

"Amazing…….eh, this…….is really my hand……?"

"Yes, It is without a doubt real. Ufufu, if I got such a nice reaction, I look forward to the next room."

"Eh……..?"

"Alright, once you wear your clothes, this time it's this way."

And thus, Kotori who appears to have been waiting on the chair placed on the edge of the room, stood up while saying that. Incidentally next to her, Tohka and Yoshino were leaning on each other sleeping.

Natsumi put on her the hospital gown she took off just now following what she was told before, passing the door deep in the room and advancing to the next room.

“Kukuku, glad you came. This is us Yamai’s territory!”

“Admiration. I’ll praise you for that courage.”

When Natsumi entered the next room, the identical twins were taking a somewhat cool pose while welcoming her.

It was the gapless lineup of the slender Kaguya and the glamorous Yuzuru. Like she guessed, they were the type of girls Natsumi hates.

“Wh-where is…….”

Natsumi opened her eyes wide while looking around the room. There was a big mirror on the wall and facing towards it, there was a big chair placed there. She understood from one look. Over here------was a beauty parlor.

“Guiding. First off come this way”

After saying that, Yuzuru pulled Natsumi’s hand.

"Wah……"

Just like that, Natsumi sat on the chair deep in the room, and a big cloth was placed on her, covering her from her neck to below.

The chair then fell, and she was made to face upwards.

"Wha-what are……."

"Resuming. You will know soon"

After Yuzuru said that, she twisted the faucet near her hands and soon, there were warm water pouring on Natsumi's head.

When she did that, the shampoo foamed bubbles and she started to gently wash Natsumi's long hair.

"Uh, ah……."

Towards the unfamiliar sensation of having her head washed by someone, Natsumi slightly stirred her body. Looking at that manner, Kaguya who was standing beside them raised a loud laugh.

"Kukakaka! Yuzuru's shampoo is extremely comfortable right! That's because she has the skills that was able to take away my victory without taking even a minute during the 71st competition-shampoo battle!"

"Smile. That's because Kaguya is ticklish."

Yuzuru quietly said that while washing the bubbles off, the nice smelling treatment coated Natsumi's hair. Thanks to it being so comfortable, Natsumi felt like sleeping again.

"Substitute.----------okay, from this point on, it is Kaguya's domain"

The treatment then finished and after blowing Natsumi's hair, Yuzuru stood up from the chair while saying that before, pulling out scissors meant for hair-dressing from her waist and skillfully turning it before preparing it in both her hands.

"Kukuku! Leave it to me!"

"Cu-cut……hair?"

"Affirmative! However, rest assured! Looking at the results in the 72nd contest- Hair care contest, my skills are obvious!"

"……you two really went with all kinds of random contests."

Looking from the side, Kotori made a wry smile while saying that. Kaguya proudly bent her chest before answering [Yep!] and standing behind Natsumi.

"What, I don't plan to randomly cut down everything. However ------the pain coming from the hair tips and heavy bundles of hairs! I will not let you off! Fall like flowers from my scissor skill – Kaizer Scheele wind!"

After shouting, Kaguya rang the scissor she was holding rhythmically, and the end of Natsumi's hair flew to the surroundings.

After several minutes, Natsumi's hair which was filled with split ends was arranged beautifully until it was shocking.

"You're kidding……..wow"

"Fuu……..well, it's about this I guess"

Just like a gunman who finished his match, Kaguya blew the tip of the scissor before hanging the finger hole with her finger and after *kuru**kuru* spinning it, she tucked it away in her waist.

After doing that, she then took out a dryer and comb next, carefully blowing Natsumi's stiff hair.

"Kuku……It looks like the habit is strong with this one but, it's not like there is no way. If I handle it during the time it is wet, they will not go on a rampage."

"Ha,haaa……"

Natsumi let sweat flow down her cheeks while nodding.

But, it's true that her skills are worth bragging. Natsumi's hair which usually has bed hair has turned unbelievably lighter. Somehow, it looked a little bit dazzling.

"Kuku, perfect. You are allowed to move to the next area."

"Consent. This way please."

"Eerrrr……."

Next area. Hearing those words, Natsumi raised her eye brows anxiously.

But, she could not retreat back since she came until here. While being urged, Natsumi opened the door located deep in the room. Following from behind was Kotori, the Yamai sisters, Miku, and Tohka and Yoshino who apparently woke up when Natsumi was having her hair cut.

Across the room was the biggest space until now. Everywhere in the wide floor that was being laminated by an incandescent lamp, there were beautifully folded shirts, coats being hung with hangers and skirts there.

Yes------it was a space resembling the shops like the so-called Select shop or Boutique.

"Whe, where is……."

Natsumi looked around restlessly. When she did that, at that moment, her eyes met with Kotori's who was behind her.

"Fufuun. If there is a Beauty salon and beauty parlor, then the next would definitely be clothes picking."

Tohka and the group *un**un* nodded at Kotori's words.

"……hu-huh? Wait a bit, I don't really like those-----"

"Okay okay, I'll listen to you later.-----okay, everyone!"

As if to interrupt Natsumi's words, Kotori *pan**pan* clapped her hands.

"Umu!"

When she did that, who knows when they prepared it, everyone was holding clothes of their preference and quickly approached Natsumi. Tohka was holding a cute one-piece and pushing it at Natsumi's body while raising a cheerful voice.

"Isn't that nice!? It's cute!"

"Un, that's true. It's not bad. But, it might be a little cold for this season though"

Kotori stroke her chin while saying that before, Yoshino and Yuzuru showed up with an outer garment and hat this time.

"Alright, together with this……..."

"Plan. This is recommended too."

"Hn, why not. Okay, put those on for now, Natsumi."

After saying that, Kotori pushed Natsumi towards the changing room like it was natural.

"Wai……why are you all talking without my concern!"

When Natsumi shouted, [Yeah yeah] Kaguya showed her agreement.

“It’s just as Natsumi says. Hold back."

After saying that, Kaguya showed a black outfit with many chains and belts attached.

“Ahh, that one is no good you know. I say this is more suitable on Natsumi-chan”

And, as if she was raising her objection, Miku showed another outfit. But this one in its own way has a lot of frills attached, and it looked like a dress made for dolls.

“……..”

Silently, Natsumi took the clothes from Tohka, Yoshino and Yuzuru before, walking heavily to the changing room and closing the curtain vigorously.

“W-why! Why would you refuse my jet black outfit……..!”

“Aaahnn! I definitely thought this would be cute!”

Across the curtain, Kaguya and Miku’s voice could be heard.

“Damn, what, what is this…….”

Natsumi mumbled while facing at each other, placed her hands on the hospital gown she was wearing.

She totally does not like this but, if she were to continue grumbling there, she might have been forced with Kaguya and Miku's choices. While feeling gloomy, she took off the hospital gown and wore the one piece and outer garment, before putting on the hat.

"Mu, Natsumi, are you done yet?"

"If you are holding back, then Tohka and I will open the curtain!"

Tohka and Kotori's voice could be heard at the opposite side of the curtain. Natsumi made a big sigh before preparing herself and completely different from the time she closed the curtain, she slowly opened the curtain up.

Tohka, Kotori, Yoshino, the Yamai sisters and Miku's sights, all gathered at Natsumi.

"Uu……."

Natsumi closed her eyes as if she was resisting the urge to vomit, gradually rising up from deep down her throat, and gritted her teeth. And the sneering laughs from the girls were----.

"Umu! It's good!"

"Uuun, personally I feel that a little more chic is better but, I wonder."

"Ah…….like this?"

"Eeh--, let's make it more daring. How about this?"

not heard.

"……..heh?"

She opened her eyes wide at the unexpected voices shaking her eardrums. When she did that, there were 6 people and 1 object looking over at her with fun and serious expressions.

"Err……"

She hesitated at the unexpected response. When she did that, Kotori handed her a good quality blouse and a monotone skirt.

"Alright, Natsumi. Wear this, this time. I think this suits you better."

"E-errr……."

"Come on, hurry up"

---After 3 hours, Natsumi kept changing and changing her clothes.

Speaking specifically, clothes weren't the only ones. Shoes, hats and several small accessories like watches and spectacles (Of course, it's just for show.) Incidentally, she was made to take poses in the final stages. She felt like a dress up doll or maybe an avatar

from those online games. She had no idea what was going on anymore. By the time everyone showed satisfaction at the clothes chosen, Natsumi has totally tired out.

"-------Okay! There is no mistake now."

"Yes……it's wonderful."

"Un Un, it's good."

"Umu! I think it's good!"

Tohka made a pleasant smile and *un**un* nodded. Next off, she moved her sights to Kotori.

"Okay then, it's finally the last room."

After Kotori said that, everyone twitched their eyebrows. Looking at that weird manner, Natsumi let sweat flow down her cheeks unintentionally.

"Wha-what…….?"

When Natsumi made a worried face, the Yamai sisters were laughing happily.

"Kuku, you'll know once you get there. Well, this way"

"Affirmative. The last assassin is waiting for you there"

"La-last……!?"

Hearing those unrest words, she gulped down. Honestly, she did not really want to go on ahead.

"Come on, let's go."

"Ah, wait…….!"

But, she was pushed on the back by Miku semi-forced, and the next room opened.

The last room, or what it's called,+ was a small space compared to any of the others until now. There was a chair isolated in the middle of the room--------and beside it, there was a girl facing her backs towards them. She has not seen that back before. She probably is the last assassin the Yamai sisters were referring about.

When Natsumi moistened her throat, the girl slowly turned around.

The hair enough to cover her back was being stopped with a four-leaf clover hair accessory, and she was a tall girl with neutral facial features. But, for some reason, she was somewhat in self-abandonment or desperate and she felt as if she was forcing herself a lot. Looking carefully, there were tears oozing at the edge of her eyes.

"----------Glad you came! This is the last room of the Natsumi transformation plan!"

"Wha-what are you planning to do……..."

When Natsumi asked, the girl muttered [……..Eeei, it has already turned to this] with a soft voice before raising the edge of her lips and immediately cross both her hands in front her chest.

Looking carefully on the girls fingers, there were makeup products like lip gloss, eye-liner, and concealers put in between.

“Tha-that’s----------!”

“Yes. I will transform you with my makeup.”

The girl *pii* pointed the lip gloss at Natsumi. Natsumi took a step back in reflex from that intensity.

She then *Buun**Buun* swung her head.

“Wha-what are you saying. There is no way I would change from that…….”

“You will!”

“Do-don’t say something so random! Someone like me……!”

“Do you really think that? That a person will not change with makeup?”

“I-isn’t that obvious!”

When Natsumi said that, the girl put the makeup products interposed between her fingers into the pouch attached to her waist. She then slowly carried her hand to her neck.

"That's, even if I……no-------"

The girl then vigorously pulled off the small bandage sticking on her throat.

"Even if I'm a guy haah!?"

"Huh……!?"

Natsumi twitched her shoulders at the sudden male voice suddenly echoing out from the girl's throat.

"Eh……? What's……..."

Natsumi was in bewilderment for a while but, she immediately noticed a certain fact.

Yes. Natsumi has heard that voice before.

"Do-don't tell me……you are Shidou……..!"

"Aah, that's right!"

The girl (?) nodded strongly.

When she looked carefully on the face, she found out Itsuka Shidou's face could be seen. The moment she recognized that, Natsumi raised her voice unintentionally.

"Per-pervert…….!?"

"……."

"Ah, he got hurt, he got hurt."

"Well, we can't deny that though."

Kotori and Miku's voice could be heard behind. It seems they knew everything.

"An-anyway!"

Collapsed on the ground, Shidou pulled himself together and looked back at Natsumi again.

"Although it was not planned, my makeup skills have reached to a level where it is enough to mistake a guy with a girl! If it is me right now, I can make you have confidence!"

"No, well, it's true your skills went up but, the person itself had the characteristics to a certain extent."

"Yeah--. I seriously thought he was a girl the first time we met."

Kotori and Miku once again started a conversation secretly. Shidou *kii* sharpened his sights.

"Ou-outsiders keep quiet! Anyway, it's a challenge Natsumi! I will use all my soul, body and skills! And [Transform] you!"

"……..!"

Natsumi stiffened her face-------however, she gritted her teeth in oppose to that.

"……..okay. Let's do this. But, don't forget. If I don't agree then, you lose the match!"

"Aah, I get it.------okay"

Shidou took a bow and urged Natsumi to the chair. He was like a servant waiting upon his princess.

Natsumi obeyed him and sat on the chair. When she did that, she was able to see Shidou's face closer. While Shidou's characteristics were left, it was finished up as a lovely girl. She could only say it was magnificent.

---Maybe, me too……..

"……..n-no, no……"

fuu she swung her head as if to shake off the imagination floating across her head.-------no matter how superior Shidou's skills were, it's going to be useless anyway. If that is the case, then it's better not to have any expectations from the start. A half-hearted hope would only turn into deep despair.

When she thought that, Shidou shaped a smile with his mouth as if he guessed Natsumi's thoughts.

"It's okay."

"……..."

After Natsumi's cheeks turned red, she faced downwards.

"……errr, can I say something?"

"Aah, what is it? Say it."

"……It's disgusting to hear a male voice coming out with that face."

"……"

In depression, Shidou stuck back the bandage he stripped off just now back onto his throat.

"We-well let's begin! First off, basics of the basics, face cleansing . If we neglect this then, it'll be bad when the makeup goes on!"

Shidou's voice turned a little high pitched but he said that to regain his composure.

Natsumi followed Shidou's instructions and washed her face carefully before, putting a proper amount of lotion on her hands and smearing it everywhere on her face.

"----------Okay, Leave the rest to me."

After saying that, Shidou quickly applied a make-up base on Natsumi face, and started making a light foundation using a puff.

"I'll say this first, Natsumi."

In the middle of working, Shidou talked to her.

"I am not remaking your face into someone else with makeup. I am just pushing your back. I am just helping you to get out of your fanatical [I am useless] thoughts"

"……..Fu-fuun, you're only good at talking."

Even though Natsumi said that unhappily, Shidou was only smiling silently.

He then applied blushes on her cheeks and eye makeup------he then smeared lip gloss on her lips for last.

"----------Okay, complete."

After Shidou made a small sigh, he put all the cosmetics back into his pouch and stood up on the spot.

"Thi-this is complete? It's quite simple."

"Like I said. There is no meaning if I kill off her original face. But-------this is enough. Look"

"Wha-what……."

When Natsumi turned around, Tohka and the girls were lined up there. And in the middle, she saw some-kind of giant board covered with a cloth. She immediately noticed. It was a giant dresser mirror. They were probably going to show her own appearance using that.

---and at that moment, Natsumi noticed the expressions of the girl standing beside the dresser mirror. Everyone was opening their eyes wide in surprise.

"Wha-what, what is it……"

After Natsumi said that in a shaken manner, Tohka made an exaggerated nod and grabbed the edge of the cloth that was covering the dresser mirror.

"Umu! Just see!"

She then pulled it off in one swing. The big dresser mirror was exposed.

"Eh-------"

She looked at the girl being shown on the mirror.

Natsumi lost her words in an instant.

Her hair which was bulging uncouthly was beautifully settled with the natural habits remaining and was dazzling from the bathing light. As if she was mistaken with her skin, her skin with bad complexion was glossy and was coupled together with cute clothes; her appearance makes her think of a young woman prided with grace.

But more importantly, the reason why Natsumi felt shock was because of the face.

On the face with more exposure from the combed down forelocks, it was certainly Natsumi. If she were to raise the difference then, it would be the faint orange-red pigment visible on the cheeks, her eyes with the outline a little clearer, and the pale sakura colored lips; she could only find small changes.

But, those single differences have turned the impression on her face lovely. In an instant, she doubted that it was a screen projecting another image instead of a mirror.

"Thi-this is…….me…….?"

"Aah, without a doubt, it is you Natsumi."

In a manner of looking at something unbelievable, Natsumi kept touching her cheeks while muttering dumbfounded, Shidou then placed his hand on her small shoulder.

As if to continue from that, the girls lined up started to raise their voice all at once.

"Umu! You're pretty!"

"A-ra, isn't it good? How is it? Your impression."

"Oh my, oh my…….hey Natsumi-san. Would you come to my house to play next time?"

In a certain extent, she felt that only one person was dazzling in her eyes compared to the others but, Natsumi was standing rock still there dumbfounded and she was not that attentive.

"------How is it? Natsumi. What's the result of the match?"

After saying that, Shidou looked at Natsumi's eyes from the mirror.

"…….!"

Natsumi gasped unintentionally. Just now for an instant, Natsumi thought of the girl in the mirror------

---thought she was cute.

"Ah…….ah……."

Natsumi's eyes spun round and round, and her legs trembled.

She should be happy. She should be in joy. She never would have thought that her appearance which she has hated a lot would change this much. But within that short time, such an unexpected event happened and she was unable to process the situation in her mind.

---What? What just happened? Who is this? M-me? Rather, what is with these people? Why would they do so much for me? Even though I did those bad things. Aren't they having problems with their head? Match?

What match? I will lose if I was cute, that kind of lose. Then it's a big defeat. Because, it's a little cute. Eh, but, this, eh…….?

"O-oi, Natsumi…….?"

"U-a-a-aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhhhhhh--------!!"

She does not understand anything anymore. After Natsumi scratched off her head, she raised a loud shout and started running towards the original room.

Part 3

In the end after that, Natsumi slipped on the [Salon Do Miku] floor and fell down showily, she then hit her head on the wall and lost consciousness. She probably was really surprised. The hair that was arranged got messy and the stitches on the clothes came apart.

Natsumi who was unconscious was made to change into a hospital gown now, and she was sleeping in the quarantine space again. Maybe she was seeing a bad dream because, she would squirm around on the bed sometimes and *un**un* groan painfully.

"Fumu……"

Outside the room while looking at the monitor, Kotori was placing her hand on her chin. Looking at that suffering expression, Shidou scratched his cheeks.

"Maybe we forced her too much as expected. I didn't think she would hate it that much……"

"……..no, it seems that isn't the case."

"Eh?"

When Shidou tilted his head, Reine who was sitting beside Kotori, showed the screen near her hands. There were several numbers displayed including Natsumi's face.

"……..Mental state, mood, affection level……..all of it has left the worst situation. Of course, it's not in the level where sealing is possible"

"I-is that so?"

"…….aah. She, by all means does not hate her transformation. Well, it seems her discomposure and bewilderment was big"

"Ah--……..."

Hearing Reine's words, Shidou [I see] nodded. It's true that he felt that Natsumi's panic was not normal.

"…….most likely, she is not used to being praised in her untransformed state. The thought of her not being bothered by others unless she transforms is the reason for calling herself useless . Deep inside her heart, despite wanting [Herself] to be accepted, she does not have the confidence for that."

Reine continued on while making one finger stand.

"…….from the interview and analysis, it seems compared to the other spirits, we found out that the number of Natsumi's silent coming to this world is extremely high. She must be a spirit with a high curiosity. She is also acquainted with this world's knowledge too. It's not an admirable method but, since she was able to forge money using <Haniel>, it seems shopping wasn't a problem to her. "

"I see……but, if that was the case then, why doesn't she have confidence in herself like that?"

"……no, isn't that the reason why?"

Reine groaned difficultly. After listening to that, Shidou recalled back Natsumi's words.

"Now that I think back, she said no one would bother about her if [Natsumi] remains as [Natsumi] in this world"

"……..Mostly likely, those accumulated experience has probably distorted Natsumi's value view. Since she changed the appearance thoughtlessly at her will, it seems it has gradually started to make her deny her normal self……the important factor is not about personal appearance but rather, it is whether we can make her think that someone would accept her."

"That's suffering."

Kotori sighed while shrugging her shoulders.

"But well, since there is an acknowledged desire then, there is a chance for the capture. We just have to make her have confidence in herself right? If we do that then, she would probably take in words honestly. It would probably soften her attitude too."

"It'll be nice if it would go that well……"

"Nothing will start if we become pessimistic. Anyway, let's try this. We will immediately begin Natsumi's rehabilitation tomorrow."

"Rehabilitation……huh. What are we going to do specifically?"

When Shidou asked, Kotori *fuumu* groaned as if she was immersing in thoughts.

"Well let's see……anyway, we just have to make her believe that [She herself is cute] so, a direct evaluation to her from a 3rd person might be good."

"No, but no matter how many times we called her cute……."

"Like I said, a third person. Shidou and the spirits were related to Natsumi's [Transform] so it's going to be hard. Even though we planned to give her a legitimate evaluation, it will be meaningless if we make her think that we were looking at her through a tinted glass. --------I could prepare people from <Ratatoskr> but, I would hope for someone that has no relations with our motives if possible . Shidou, do you have anyone you can think of?"

"Eh? Let's see……"

After Shidou scratched his cheeks, a face of one friend popped up, and [ah] he let out his voice.

"No--, you said you will introduce me a girl? As expected a friend is something we should have!"

Next day. In a manner of totally forgetting the turmoil that happened few days ago, he was hitting Shidou's back in a good mood.

Yes. Shidou's classmate Tonomachi Hiroto was the person he called over to work as Natsumi's rehabilitation. Within Shidou's friends, he is the best in going with the flow, and good with his words. Since he was a victim in the previous incident, he should be someone Natsumi was familiar with. Shidou thought this would soften the nervousness of meeting someone the first time even if it is a little.

"It's not like I am introducing her to you but…….well, how should I put it, she is a little shy so. Will you be a talking partner with her?"

"Okay okay. Leave it to me, my best friend. I will definitely call you to the ceremony."

"……..haha"

Tonomachi *don* hit his chest while nodding. Shidou felt that his idea about her has leaped too far before even meeting her yet… ……*Did I pick the wrong person?*

"By the way Itsuka, where is this place? You went through the trouble of blind folding me and riding a taxi. Honestly speaking, my heart was pumping hard thinking about where I was being taken……."

Shidou and Tonomachi were currently in a space that looks like a small stylish hotel lounge. Naturally, since they can't let Natsumi to the ground, it was a corner of the underground facility that was remodeled. Customers and staffs could be seen but, all of them were <Ratatoskr>'s members.

"W-well, don't worry much about it. I'll send you back too."

When Shidou said that while having sweat streaming down his cheeks, Tonomachi sharpen his eyes.

"I think this is impossible but, Itsuka……is that girl.."

"Ehh?"

Looking at that Tonomachi's gaze who looks like he saw through everything, Shidou twitched his shoulders.

Tonomachi has no idea about Spirits but, he had probably gotten suspicious as expected. It's bad if he has a preconception of Natsumi before even meeting her. Shidou search through his thoughts to trick him. But,

"Don't tell me, she is an Ojou-sama from a very rich family!?"

"Heh……?"

Hearing Tonomachi saying that in an excited manner, Shidou replied back with a hysteric voice.

"A sick young woman that is not often outdoors……..she got really excited from the school picture my friend (Itsuka) showed her and……one day, she saw one boy inside the picture……aah, she wants to meet this gentleman……! The girl then mustered her courage and requested the friend to call that particular boy……..! It's about that right!?"

"O-ou, well……right about there I guess."

When I matched up the conversation with something random, Tonomachi [Kuuuuuuu] twisted his body as if he was overcome with emotions.

"The youth of my world is here! Thank you Itsuka! I'll still be your friend even though I become a gold-digger……!"

"A-aah……."

Tonomachi shook his hands. It was somehow conscious but, it hurts.

But, Tonomachi did not notice Shidou's manner and looked around.

"So? Where is my sweet heart?"

"Aah…….over there"

After saying that, he pointed to a seat. Over there, wearing cute clothes and with beautiful make up-------a very unhappy Natsumi was sitting there.

"……..."

Natsumi was sitting down on the chair while making a disappointed face.

When she woke up in the morning, Kotori suddenly came over and without any explanation, brought her to a place like this.

Where on earth is this? Since she was not used to appearing in front of people in her un-transformed state from <Haniel>, it just felt uncomfortable. Each time the surrounding customers had a friendly chat, she felt uneasy that they might be laughing at her.

And, at that moment.

"Hello, nice to meet you!"

An unusually happy voice echoed from the front and Natsumi twitched her body.

When she looked over, she found out there is one young man there. She has seen that face somewhere before.------yes, it was Shidou's classmate. His name should be------

"……..To-Tonomachi Hiroto…….why are you here?"

Without looking at him, when Natsumi said that suspiciously, Tonomachi opened his eyes wide in surprise.

"Yo-you know my name!? Tohka-chan and Kaguya-chan won't remember it no matter how long passes!"

After saying that, he choked in tears of gratitude. It somehow felt disgusting, so Natsumi pulled the chair a little.

But, Tonomachi did not notice Natsumi's actions and sat on the opposite seat with that high tension still present.

"How do you do! What is your name called!?"

"……I-its…….Natsumi"

"Natsumi-chan! That is a wonderful name!"

"……."

Natsumi looked at him suspiciously at Tonomachi's over-familiar words.

This man, just when she thought he appeared suddenly, just what is he saying? Maybe he was told to praise Natsumi in a request from Shidou or Kotori……..?

Yes. There is no mistake in that. If it is not that then, there is no way he would know Natsumi at the beginning of his speech.

"No---, I didn't think you would be this cute. I seriously have to thank Itsuka."

During the time Natsumi was thinking about that, Tonomachi continued bouncing his words in fun. Natsumi snorted.

"……how much?"

"Eh?"

"How much were you bribed for this request? It must be a good sum of money."

"……..? What are you saying?"

Tonomachi wrung his neck. He looked as if he was not hit with a bulls-eye.

"……."

Natsumi raised her eyebrows…….what is going on? Normally, when a person got a bulls-eye, a response would appear from the body at the very least. And, there is no way Natsumi who ’s strong point is observation would not notice that.

Which means……..don’t tell me this man called Natsumi cute seriously.

“……uh.”

When she got conscious about that, Natsumi felt her heartbeat going up. No, impossible. It has to be an act. But, the current Natsumi was different from the Natsumi from yesterday. It was the Natsumi who has transformed thanks to Shidou and the girls. Just maybe---------

And, after Natsumi’s eyes started to swim around, Tonomachi hit his forehead with his head while continuing his words.

“No, I am seriously surprised. You really are cute. I got dizzy unintentionally seriously!”

“…….!!”

Natsumi suddenly stiffened her face, at Tonomachi’s words.

I got dizzy.

↓

To get dizzy…….Meaning: Close to collapsing from dizziness.

↓

I am about to collapse from dizziness by looking at you.

↓

I feel sick just by looking at you, ugly.

"I knewwwwwwwww ittttttt!!"

Natsumi raised a loud shout before flipping the table.

"U-uwah!? Wha-whats wrong Natsumi-chan?!"

"Don't [what's wrong?] me! Screwing with me, screwing with me! Even I don't like to become this!"

When she started rampaging while shouting, the staffs in the surroundings jumped in and restrained Natsumi.

"Cal-calm down, miss……!"

"An-anyway, time to withdraw! We will take her like this!"

"U-understood…….!"

"What are you doing bastard! Let goooooooo!"

Natsumi was then pulled deep into the lounge just like that.

Part 4

"……no good."

"…….That was no good."

Around the time when Natsumi managed to calm down, Shidou and Kotori sighed at the same time.

Incidentally, Tonomachi has been sent to the upper ground already. After Natsumi's sudden rampage, he was feeling shaken the whole time but, [Like I thought, that is a serious sickness…….…but, I will support Natsumi-chan…….!] he said those strange words but, it was unknown whether he was being rude or manly.

"Well, what are we going to do?"

"I thought of the next way just in case.----Kannazuki."

"Hah!"

Kotori clicked her fingers and a tall man who was standing-by from who knows where, *Shuta*! Appeared over there. He was Kotori's assistant and also <Fraxinus> vice commander, Kannazuki Kyouhei.

Looking at Kannazuki who he has seen many times already, Shidou unintentionally raised his eyebrows. However, that was only normal. Right now, he was wearing light brown sunglass while sporting a cardigan on his shoulders without putting his arms through the sleeves and instead had it tied in front of his chest; it was a fishy stereotypical producer style.

"Kannazuki-san……? Why do you look like that?"

"Fufu----------this is my secret plan. Let's teach that negative kitten her own charm."

When Shidou said that, Kannazuki gave a thumb up in confidence.

"……What is it this time?"

It has been 3 hours since the event with Tonomachi. Having regained her composure, Natsumi was now left alone in a place that looks like a café.

It seems there is a place she was going to be dragged to later so, they want her to wait here for a while but……..where on earth was she going to be brought to? While looking downwards a little to avoid the sights from the surrounding, Natsumi thought that.

And-----at that moment.

“Oooo? OOOOOOOOOOOOOOo?”

When she thought she heard such a voice, a man with a suspicious appearance like wearing sunglasses and a cardigan on his shoulders approached Natsumi as if he was peeking at her face .

“……..uh, wha-what is it……?”

When Natsumi’s face was oozing out wariness, the man *pechin * hit his forehead in an overreaction manner.

“Ooootoo, I beg my pardon! I am always like this.”

After saying that, the man took out a business card from his pocket and handed it to Natsumi.

“…….Ratatoskr production, team manager, Kannazuki Kyouhei.”

“Yes! It’s a company that produces movies and television shows , or even modeling and talent managements.”

The person called Kannazuki took an exaggerated bow and continued on in an excited manner.

“This may be sudden but, miss! Do you have any interest in becoming a model!?”

“Eh……..?”

Natsumi opened her eyes wide at the words that were suddenly let out.

"Mo-model……..wait, the ones that are on magazines……?"

"Yes! That model!"

Kannazuki energetically nodded. But, Natsumi sighed coldly as response.

That's because it's modeling. Natsumi recalled the magazines and television shows she saw in this world. If Natsumi's memories are correct, being a model means being a girl with good style and slender tall body.

If it was Natsumi in her <Haniel> transformed state then it would be acceptable but, it was clear that it wouldn't be fit for Natsumi's current condition. This guy must be **[that]**. There was no mistake he was a corrupted contractor that would trick girls with sweet talking and obtain big sums of money by using the pretext of being a lesson specialist.

"……I'm sorry but, I hate jokes. Modeling is something that belongs to people with good style and the right height. Someone like me would not---------" In a manner of self-mockery, when Natsumi said that, Kannazuki *buun**buun* swung his head.

"It is not a joke! Good style? Hah, what meaning is there with boobs only being big! No none at all! Rhetorically! A real beauty means an immature body like a bud in preparations of blooming

under the presence of spring! Wonderful! The current you is really wonderful! You are the one with the nice body! Stay that way forever!”

“……..uh.”

Towards Kannazuki who was approaching closer to her with his breathing getting wilder, Natsumi backed off in reflex. Just like Tonomachi from just now, he does not look like he was lying.

It was a little disgusting but, he might really think of her like that. Do humans that love people like Natsumi exist in this world ……? No, but calling the current Natsumi having a nice body is just……..

“Hah……”

Natsumi opened her eyes wide.

Natsumi has a nice body

↓

Natsumi’s body is good

↓

Your looks are regretful but, there are no problems with the functions.

↓

Seems like your organs would sell pretty well.

“Mur-murderer…….!?”

After Natsumi raised a screaming-like voice, she stood up from the chair.

“Oya, what is wrong?”

“Do-don’t come closer! I will not be fooled! I will not be fooled!”

“I am not fooling you! Alright, since we are at a place like this, if you like could you come to the office---“

After saying that, Kannazuki grabbed Natsumi’s arm.

“Kyaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!”

After Natsumi raised a high-pitched shout, she gave Kannazuki a slap on his cheeks and ran deeper into the shop.

Part 5

“……still no good.”

“……that was still no good.”

After looking at the circumstances, Shidou and Kotori sighed once again.

"No haha, I'm sorry."

Not looking any sorry, Kannazuki laughed. He had a distinctive autumn colored mark on his cheeks, and one of the sunglasses lens was broken.

"Well, there is Kannazuki being too disgusting, but it seems Natsumi's negative thoughts are over our imagination. It might be better if we lower the level here."

"Are you saying……..drop the level?"

"Let's see…….first off, rather than praising her, let's start by making her understand that people won't laugh if she has a normal conversation with someone."

"Fumu……specifically?"

"Something like making her place an order in a fast food shop."

"……The level sure dropped a lot."

Shidou made a wet smile while scratching his cheeks. Looking at the responses until now, it's true that that might be better for Natsumi. Getting her to gradually get used from there is probably more reliable.

"Okay, let's move to the next set. We are going to bring Natsumi out from the room so, please prepare for that."

When Kotori said that, she made the rod of the chupa chups she was eating stand up.

"……..so, what is it this time?"

Natsumi made a stern expression while glaring at Shidou and Kotori who were sitting opposite her.

Natsumi was brought to a place that is thought to be a hamburger shop. In the surroundings, there were students heading back home from school and parents bringing their children along; the place was lively.

"Nothing, just a little hungry that's all."

"Aah, yeah yeah. Just hungry."

Kotori said that nonchalantly while Shidou said it unnaturally. Natsumi looked at them in doubt.

"So, I'm sorry but, I will hand you the money so please go make the orders. I'll leave the menu to you."

"Ha……..hah!? why should I……."

"It's alright. Here take this. Don't drop it okay?"

"He-hey wait…….!"

After Natsumi was forced to hold the paper money, she headed to the order counter.

"…….guh."

There were a lot of things bothering her, but she had no choice. Natsumi headed there and stood in front of the register while looking downwards. "Welcome! Have you decided what to order? "

The girl with hair bangs standing at the register talked to her with a smile. Natsumi calmed her ringing heartbeat while talking with a shaky voice.

"…….3……Ha-hamburger……."

"Okay! 3 hamburgers!"

"…….Ye-yes correct."

"Would you like potatoes with that?"

"……..!"

Even though the staff asked with a smile, Natsumi opened her eyes wide.

Would you like potatoes with that?

↓

Potato in this case = Fried potatoes.

↓

Getting fat is very easy with the combination of carbohydrates and oil.

↓

That seedy-looking body might become a tad better if you add more flab won't it?

"God. Damn. Ittttttttttt!"

"Eeh!?"

When Natsumi gave a cork screw punch at the register, the staff member twitched her body.

"I know that without you telling meeeeeee! It's not like I love having this kind of bodyyyyy!"

"A wait…….mi-miss!?"

"Na-Natsumi!"

"Shidou! Restrain her!"

Shidou's and Kotori's voice could be heard behind. After Natsumi was immediately caught, she was brought back to the original room.

I'd Like To Believe

Chapter 9: It's Definitely A Lie

Part 1

"------<Humpty dumpty> docking success"

"System all green. There is no problem with the orbit calibration"

"It will reach the target altitude point 5 hours from now"

"DSS-009 airship <Heptameron> has reached its prescribed point"

Coming from the speaker installed in the council room in the DEM industry Britain HQ, reports could be heard coming one after another. Murdoch looked at the several data displayed on the crystal screen in front of him while, making an exaggerated nod.

"------Where is Westcott MD now?"

"He has not moved from his lodging place. It is predicted that If a spacequake alarm is issued then, he would probably evacuate to the shelter in the hotel or maybe, to the nearest facility which has connections with DEM"

"What's the endurance?"

"There is no problem, even if it is within the 10 kilometers error from the <Humpty Dumpty> impact point then"

"How is the condition of the [Second Egg]?"

"Preparations done. It can go any time if there is an order"

"Enough"

"……[Second Egg]?"

Hearing Murdoch words, Simpson looked at him suspiciously. Murdoch raised the side of his lips while sending his sights back.

"Well, it's just a back-up plan. It is not something to be worried about"

"……."

Simpson looked at Murdoch silently for a while but not long later, he looked back at the crystal screen near his hands.

He looked unsatisfied and--------looked as if he got the creeps from Murdoch.

---This is a good omen. After Murdoch distorted his lips in satisfaction, he then crawled his sights at the board directors lined up in the council room.

"The plan is going very smoothly. Westcott MD's death report would probably reach us by tonight. It seems the company funeral is going to be a grand one. I recommend you all to think of your condolences while you have time now"

After hearing those words, the board directors looked at each other in an instant before, making awkward smiles.

Even though it was operation day, they were still scared of opposing Westcott MD. Most likely, by any chance this plan ends with a failure then, there would probably be people working to push all the responsibility onto Murdoch.

Murdoch made a snort big enough to let the others hear him. He didn't really mind that. If he is able to get these cowards to show approval to this plan with, just with that one back-up then it is a profit. If Murdoch were to fail this plan anyway, then he as the mastermind would lose his life. It's the same no matter which he picks.

Originally, he didn't have to make the board directors to join in the anti-Westcott faction until he had to risk information leakage. But, when he thought about the concealment of all the information of the plan, the workforce needed to execute the plan and securing the airship then in reality; Murdoch's authorities can practically do nothing. No--------more specifically, the only person in the DEM Company that could execute plans of this scale alone, would probably be Westcott.

Even if this has no benefits to this large thick-headed group.

The reason was simple.------Everyone here, knows of the reason and cause of Westcott's disappearance.

If the news of Westcott reached us then, a special board meeting will be commenced and it would be about deciding a new person with the strongest influence and power.

Once that is established--------who on earth would everyone here right now be conscious about first.

It would obviously be the worst scandal which caused the assassination of the previous MD. If that person holds information one-sidedly then, the next person that would disappear would be him. But, all of the board directors lined up here are accomplices. On top of that, they are all cowards. Nobody would complain even if Murdoch is named up as the next MD.

"……no, it is a little different"

Murdoch opened and closed his right hand which has its bandages off while muttering that softly.

He has planned to act as the criminal. In a way, this is one of the methods to grab the hearts of people.

But---------after the moment his arm was cut off by Ellen Mathers, slowly but gradually.

He has really felt himself turning crazy.

After Murdoch *nii* smiled, he looked at <Humpty Dumpty> being shown out on the crystal screen while humming a nursery rhyme inside his mouth.

Mother goose

"……..Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall. Humpty Dumpty had a great fall……..♪"

Part 2

In addition to having the bed cover covering over her head, and squatting down by sitting on the bed grasping her knees, Natsumi was mumbling something in a soft voice.

"……What was that……..what was that……what was that……..!"

Incomprehensible torrents of emotions filled her head, and the feelings made her leak those emotions as words from her mouth. Like spinning thoughts. In that chaos, Natsumi made a low groan while making the same posture from just now.

"Just what is wrong……with those people……."

Why are those people caring for Natsumi this much. Why are they this kind to Natsumi.

She could understand if it was the transformed beautiful onee-san Natsumi when she used <Haniel>'s power. The transformed Natsumi was a beauty that could stop anyone on their tracks. Males would harbor love and lust, while females would hide envy and jealousy in the other side of their stomachs, while lining up various flattery words to Natsumi.

But------they are different.

To Natsumi. They told her that her original form without transforming with <Haniel>'s power is cute.

Those words were supposed to be something Natsumi wishes the most. However……since it was the first time she was told that, she just could not accept it honestly.

"That….is obviously a lie. Ha-ha……..Ye-yes. Those people are deceiving me. That's because I-------"

Natsumi muttered that while lifting up the bed cover she has put on. When she did that, she saw her own appearance being reflected back in the mirror installed on the wall.

---At the cute appearance produced by them.

"……..!"

She gasped and put the bed cover back on. Her thoughts got more chaotic.

---That's because, Natsumi was supposed to be ugly. She was suppose to be hopelessly ugly, unattractive and not cute. It has to be like that. ***It has been determined that way.***

"……Ah-re……"

At that moment, a question floated in Natsumi's mind.

---It has been determined that way……..?

Why---------was it determined that way.

"……..A-anyway…….it is impossible to think they would do that to the enemy without any reason. There is definitely ……some kind of goal……"

After Natsumi said that, she raised her hands to her chest and muttered softly.

"……<Haniel>……..!"

When she did that, her hands glowed and a mirror manifested on top of the palm of her hand.

"Guh……..."

Her injuries hurts but……it was at a manageable level. Natsumi pointed the mirror downwards------at the beds direction and transform it to a [Bed with a hole which can hide one person].

Next off, she dragged a doll into the bed sheet and transformed it to a shape identical to a Natsumi sleeping.

Natsumi squirmed around in the bed cover and left the dummy Natsumi on the bed before, putting herself into the hole in the bed. And for the third time, she made <Haniel> glow, and closed the surface of the bed before, in a digging down fashion; used <Haniel > to transform the bed, floor, and the inside of the wall to pass through them.

"……..okay"

And after a few minutes. When she reached a corridor with no one in it, Natsumi reconstructed the wall and looked around.

There were several observer cameras in the room Natsumi was quarantined at but, she should be able to trick them for a while. For example, there is a fear they might enter to check up on her if she did not touch the food even though it was given to her. There was no time for leisure.

In order for Natsumi to finish her goal quickly, she recalled back the faces of the people she met here in her head. Most likely, the most favorable would-----

"…….It should be her"

After Natsumi made a small nod, she held <Haniel>'s mirror over her head.

At the same time with the mirror glowing, Natsumi's body released a pale light. Her body then gradually distorts and------- after a few seconds, Natsumi turned into someone else.

It was a girl with a petite body wearing a red military uniform. She had her hair tied into two with black ribbons and her proud expression was impressive.

Yes-----It was Itsuka Shidou's sister, Itsuka Kotori.

She picked her because she was the most appropriate, since she would walk around this facility while observing everyone's condition.

However about that. This girl comes with twin-tails hairstyle. The ace of cute hairstyles, the twin-tails. It is a hairstyle that is only used if the person has quite a confidence in herself. Natsumi hates this hairstyle very much. She hated it so much that she thought of transforming into the country's influential person and establishing a ban of twin-tails as a law……but she has no choice now. She was really reluctant to disguise as a pushy twin-tail girl but, efficiency is her priority now.

“Oopps, almost forgot”

After Natsumi muttered that, she tore off a button from a conspicuous spot, and hold <Haniel> over there.

When she did that, the edge of the cloth made a pale glow and it transformed into a small candy with a rod attached. It should be one that Kotori usually licks.

“Well, it should be like this”

Natsumi then said that in a voice completely changed from a few seconds ago and clicked her fingers. In an instant, <Haniel> which was floating on the palm of her hands, turned into light particles and disappeared into the air.

“Alright then……..”

<Haniel> disappeared, and Natsumi who has completely turned into Itsuka Kotori, took a deep breath before starting to walk along the path slowly.

In order to not make anyone she might pass by feel suspicious half-way through, she moved her eyes around to check the surroundings. In the wide and long corridor, she found a door with an electronic lock installed in it. She still does not know the whole layout of this building but, it easy to figure out that this facility was quite big.

"……..Seriously, what is this place"

Natsumi muttered that in a voice soft enough that no one could hear. It is true that this facility is somewhat connected to Shidou, Kotori, Tohka and the girls but, she knows nothing else other than that. There is no way they would allow those young girls and boy use this building freely in the first place anyway. They must be affiliated with some kind of organization-------or maybe they have a big supporter behind them. When she thought about that, Natsumi naturally felt a chill running down her back.

By any means, were they planning to use the captured Spirit who is Natsumi as an experimental animal. While looking at the scenery of the corridor which makes her think of a research institute or hospital, Natsumi thought of that.

Natsumi then walked while thinking of that before, a voice called out to her from behind.

"Ah-re, Commander?"

"……!"

After making a slight twitch with her shoulders and turning around, she found a girl with long hair bangs wearing the a different color military uniform just like Kotori's standing over there. It was the hamburger shop's staff that Shidou and the group brought her to yesterday.

"What happened for you to be here? Didn't you just say that you are going back to the <Fraxinus>?"

"……, Aah, I thought of checking out Natsumi's condition"

She let out her voice, to avoid squeezing out any discomposure. The girl then nodded without holding any suspicion.

"Ah, is that so…….well, she is a difficult one after all. If this keeps up, it might be difficult to seal her……."

"Seal? What are you talking about"

When Natsumi tilted her head, the girl opened her eyes wide in wonder.

"Well, it's about the reiryoku sealing. We make her kiss Shidou-kun and it would seal her spirit powers. Aren't we an organization for that"

"…….!"

Natsumi twitched her eyebrows but, she pretended to be calm in order to avoid her discomposure to be picked up.

"Aah……..That's right. Sorry, I am a little tired so"

"Ahaha…….It's only normal. Okay, I will head back once I finish my work so, later"

After saying that, she took a light bow. Natsumi felt relieved in her heart while replying back to her.

"Errr.----------oh yeah, can I ask something?"

"Yes? What is it?"

Natsumi asked the girl and naturally let out her voice.

"Did you see where……Tohka and the rest are? I have something to do with them"

"Tohka-chan…….huh. Errrr, if I am correct, I think she is at the resting area at the other side"

"I see, thank you. See you later"

"Ah----------Yes. See you later.

Natsumi saw her off and tip-toed to the direction the girl pointed to, before walking again. -----she walked in a fast pace in a manner that does not look unnatural.

She has losses and gains from the girl at the same time. The gains------was the information, about where Tohka and the rest were at and Kotori not being in the facility now. With this, no matter how long Natsumi walks around, there is a guarantee she won't bump into the real person. And more importantly, the fact she found out Shidou and the girls goals was very big. **I see**, just when she thought what kind of goals they had, to think they would try to seal Natsumi's powers.

"I thought it was strange. Those damn hypocrites……..!"

And at the same time, someone has found out that a person with Kotori's appearance was in this facility. Once she finishes her work and heads back to that so-called <Fraxinus>, there is a possibility the real Kotori would question that. Natsumi doesn't have time to play around.

And, after walking for a while, she saw a space which was a little opened up ahead. There were several long chairs and vending machines lined up there-------she then found out Tohka and Yoshino were sitting over there.

Natsumi narrowed her eyes before walking over there.

"-----Hi, Tohka, Yoshino"

"Mu?"

"Ah……Hello"

"Oooh? Well if it isn't Kotori-chan"

Tohka, Yoshino and Yoshino's left hand [Yoshinon] looked over to her in sequence and called out to her. Natsumi swung her hand with a smile before walking over to the bench both of them were sitting at and standing in front of them.

"Ooo, Kotori! This place is amazing! You can drink for free!"

"Kotori-san wants……to get a drink too?"

"What do you want? Yoshinon will push it with my phantom left okay?"

After saying that, [Yoshinon] *sha*! *sha*! Started shadow boxing.

Natsumi made a wry smile while swinging her head before, folding her arm while opening her mouth.

She then-----asked. The thing Natsumi wants to know the most right now.

"I'm okay now. More importantly, what do you all think-----about that Natsumi"

Yes. There is no mistake that they were making fun of Natsumi deep in their heart. They might have to get in a good mood with

Natsumi to seal her powers but, if it is a place where Natsumi is not at right now, they will definitely spill out their wicked true thoughts.

"By what……you mean?"

Tohka tilted her head.------what a vexing girl. Or maybe, she does not want to be the first one to insult. If that is the case then------

Natsumi snorted before casting her eyes downwards and continued her words as if she was spitting out.

"That Natsumi is disgusting right? She got full of herself when we flattered her. In spite of being ugly, she sure is shameful right"

She shrugs her shoulders while saying that.

---The origin is set. ***Okay, spit out your true feelings***. Natsumi opened her eyes as if to urge Tohka and Yoshino. Now that these girls gained a justification of [Not being the one who started the ill talking], there is no mistake they are making filthy expressions.

But------

"Nu?"

"Eh…….?"

"Hnnn------?"

Over there were 2 people and 1 object looking at each other.

"Eh……?"

Natsumi opened her eyes wide at the unexpected reactions. When she did that, Tohka brought her eyebrows closer while talking.

"Kotori……..what happened? It's not like you to say that "

"A-ahhno…….Natsumi-san is not disgusting…….is what I think"

"That's right. What happened Kotori-chan. Are you in tired mode from commanding affairs?"

"Wha……."

Natsumi took a step back in reflex.

"Wha-what is wrong with you all. Its okay, you all don't have to act all goody-goody. Everyone thought of this before in the end right? That it is annoying to be in a good mood with that shabby girl"

"What are you saying? That is not true you know? It was very fun choosing clothes!"

When Tohka said it with a bright face, Yoshino and [Yoshinon] tilted their head forwards in agreement to that.

"Yes…….Natsumi-san was pretty……"

“Iyaaah, Shidou-kun’s make up was amazing. Yoshinon should ask him to do it for me next time”

With that said, [Yoshinon]*ufuun* bend it’s hips. Tohka and Yoshino laughed happily at that funny appearance.

“Be-because……there……..is no way…….”

After Natsumi made her eyes swim around in discomposure, she shook her petite body.

---These girls are really saying from their true feelings.

This fact caused an impact strong enough to make a crack in Natsumi’s identity.

Many possibilities were presented in Natsumi’s mind in an instant. Maybe they saw through the fact that Natsumi was disguising as Kotori, and was telling the same story which was set beforehand. Or, they might be enforced to praise Natsumi because someone precious to them were taken hostage. No no or maybe----

Preposterous thoughts appeared and disappeared. But none of it holds any persuasiveness in front of Tohka and Yoshino’s smiles.

“I-it’s a lie. Why would……..”

Natsumi has forgotten about acting like Kotori and her fingers were trembling before, she saw 3 girls walking from the front. It was the Yamai sisters and Miku.

"Kuku, why are you all gathered?"

"Petition. Let us join in too"

"Fufu, everyone is having a tea party"

"Ka-Kaguya, Yuzuru, Miku…….!"

Natsumi shook her throat at the new visitors as if she was depending on them. 3 of them opened their eyes wide and stopped because they were shocked of Natsumi's sudden shout.

"Fuun, what's wrong Kotori. You look strange. Did you open the door to hell sealed in the darkness?"

Kaguya took a cool pose while saying something strange. Natsumi ignored that for now and continued talking while mending back her composure.

"Lis-listen to this everyone. Tohka and Yoshino are acting weird "

"Question. By weird you mean?"

Yuzuru asked in wonder. Natsumi made a dry smile while continuing.

"I am talking about, isn't it annoying to care for her or that Natsumi is beautiful you know? Ahaha, it's funny right. The tension would drop just by looking at that ugly"

When Natsumi shrug her shoulders while saying that, the 3 of them brought their eyebrows together in suspicion.

“Fuun, Kotori you sure say some weird words, it’s not like you. What on earth happened. It’s a little bit too early to get crazy from the moon’s poison”

“Suspicion. Those are words that seem impossible from Kotori”

“Don’t talk of Natsumi-chan that way. If you go too far, even I would get angry!”

Miku put her hands on her hips and *punsuka*! Puffed up her cheeks.

Natsumi felt her heart beating faster at the girl’s reactions.

“Wai-wait a second……she is a bad spirit that tried to trap us inside that mirror, and replace us! Think normally! Why would you side with such a person! Aren’t you all crazy or something!?”

She has completely forgotten she was transformed as Kotori already, and raised a shout following emotions.

Even though everyone was bewildered at Natsumi’s state but, they looked at each other and [uu-nn…….] groaned.

“Well……It’s true that Natsumi made us go through some scary things but……”

“Right!? Then------“

As if to agree with Miku who said that while placing her fingers on her chin, she raised her voice. However------

"But……if I say that then, I did cause quite a ruckus before so ……..i have no intentions like saying something like let it wash away but, at the very least I am thinking of getting closer with Natsumi-chan you know?"

When Miku said that, the other girls started to nod too.

"Ooo! Me too!"

"M-me too…….desu. I think…….we could become friendlier"

"Judging from the conversation, she chose Yoshinon before transforming right? Iyaaa, she is one girl that knows how to differentiate"

"Fuun, well, she is a brave warrior that is able to corner me like that. Looks like there is a worth placing in a camp gate"

"Consent. She has things point worthy"

"……!"

After Natsumi lose her words, she backed off in stagger.

It seems the inside of her head is messed up already. Natsumi grit her teeth before, exiting the resting room without looking at everyone's face.

“Errr…….the lodging area was at the B sector right”

Shidou was slowly walking in the corridor of the <Ratotoskr> underground facility that Natsumi was being quarantined at.

It was quite a distance to come from the Itsuka house to here-------and what’s more, in order to avoid being followed by Ellen and people form DEM Company; he has to venture on detours, giving him a hard time just to get here.

Nonetheless, as long as Natsumi is here, Shidou has no choice but to show up. Because of that, he has to borrow the underground lodging facility for a while, and went home to take his tooth brush and change of clothes here.

The moment he approached the corridor’s corner, Shidou *don* felt a light impact on his chest.

“Oops”

When he lowered his sights, he saw a familiar hairstyle tied into two there.

“Ou, Kotori”

“……”

Although he raised his hands and said that, for some reason, Kotori remained silent and only took a glance at Shidou's face.

"You somehow look tired. Something happened?"

"…….nothing. Nothing at all"

Kotori said it in a clearly gloomy voice. Shidou scratched his head.

Kotori *pui* turn her face away while saying that as if she does not want to bother about Shidou any more than this and was about to walk away.

"Ah, wait a second"

"……..what. Even I am not free"

"Aah, sorry sorry. I'll end it soon.------it's about Natsumi"

"……!"

The moment Shidou brought up Natsumi's name, he saw Kotori 's ear twitch.

"What about Natsumi?"

After saying that, she suddenly opened her eyes wide and approached closer to him. He knows her nerves are sensitive now when it comes to Natsumi but, he felt this is just too extreme.

"A-aah……it's about Natsumi's food"

Being overpowered, when Shidou said that, he found out Kotori [……haa] mouth was getting relaxed.

"…….fufu, ah, your real self finally came out"

"Eh?"

"Nothing. So, what are you proposing to do? Should we stop giving her food for a while from today onwards? Or should we mix poison in it?"

"No……..what are you saying. Even for a joke, that isn't funny"

He made a sullen face while having sweat flow down his forehead. When he did that, Kotori brought her eyebrows closer in doubt.

"Then, what is it? What are you saying are you going to do"

"Can't we let Natsumi out of that room for tonight's dinner"

"…….? What do you mean?"

"Everyone is here so, I thought we could have it together"

"…….huh?"

After *pokan* Kotori went black for an instant, [……..aah] she distorted her lips.

"I see, it's to seal her. You have one nasty personality too. Something like taking away Natsumi's reiryoku after using such a method to ensnare her"

Shidou frowned his eyebrows at those movements unlike the normal Kotori.

"What are you saying. It's <Ratatoskr>'s goal to seal her reiryoku, and allow the spirits to live a safe and happy life right"

"Eh…….?"

"Also-------It's not only for increasing the affection level, well you know, even though she is in quarantine, eating alone is just lonely right. Everyone wants to talk with Natsumi too"

"……"

"Maybe, Natsumi's feelings might soften down a bit if she eats something delicious……..wait, Kotori?"

Shidou opened his eyes wide.

The reason was simple. Kotori was starting to leak big drops of tears from her eyes.

Her cheeks and eyes were red and her shoulders were trembling bit by bit, she would also jerk up sometimes. Shidou was horrified at his stout-hearted sister's weird condition.

"O-oi, what on earth happened! Did I do something!?"

"Wha……..no-thing……"

"No, it's not nothing right! Relax, I will make your portion too so-----"

"Shut up! Die! Idiooooot!"

After Kotori shouted, she wipes off her tears with her sleeves while running in the corridor.

"Oi, Kotori!?"

Even though he was told that, there was no way he could leave it alone. Shidou hurried and followed Kotori.

However, he stopped his legs right after he turned the corner.

"Ah-re……?"

Kotori who just turned this way just now, disappeared just like the mist.

"Where did Kotori go……"

He could not find Kotori even when he looked left and right. Instead, there was one unopened chupa chups dropped at the corridor as if it was showings Kotori's whereabouts.

"……..for her to drop her candy, seriously what happened to her……..."

He then picked up the chupa chups to give her back later and headed back his original road without a choice.

And after walking for some time, his cell-phone in his pocket started to vibrate.------The name [Itsuka Kotori] was shown on the calling screen. Shidou pressed the receive button in panic.

"Hello? Kotori, are you alright?"

"……..huh, what do you mean alright?"

When Shidou asked, Kotori replied back as if she was asking him what the heck he was saying.

"No, that's because just now--------"

"More importantly, it's an emergency. I got contacted by the control room over there just now"

Kotori interrupted Shidou's words by saying that.

"--------Natsumi escaped from her room"

"Wha…….!?"

Shidou gasped at the sudden announcement.

"Escaped……!? How! She still can't use her Angel yet right!?"

"It might be because our estimations were naïve……or maybe there was a method of using her transformation ability in

an incomplete state……..something along those lines I guess. She left a dummy transformed from something which is thought to be a doll in the bed cover and disappeared. Most likely, she might have attempted an escape by transforming as someone. Got anyone in your mind of who that might be?"

"Even if you ask me……someone that comes to mind……."

Shidou opened his eyes wide and [Ah] let out his voice.

Part 3

---Almost 2 hours after that. Shidou returned to the surface.

Although every member of the organization searched the whole underground facility, Natsumi could not be seen anywhere. Judging from the testimony coming from Shidou, the girls and Shiizaki, they found out Natsumi was disguised as Kotori but, as long as Natsumi is not limited to stay in that appearance, there were no special clues.

"Natsumi……"

He walked heavily on the street of his resident city, while mumbling to himself softly. Now that Natsumi is missing, he has lost the meaning to stay underground and was heading back to his house while carrying his bag with his change of clothes inside.

In the end, starting from the time they sheltered Natsumi, Shidou has not seen her smile not even once. She hates what Shidou and the girls do and will not open her heart to them.

But-------Shidou could not ever bring himself to think that, those were Natsumi's true feelings.

It felt like a dog that has been repeatedly abused by humans for a long time, getting scared of humans by reflex even though it wants to be pampered and play with them.

That's why, there is no one here that would say bad things about Natsumi. There is no one here that would bully Natsumi. He believed that if they kept telling her that with perseverance, their feelings would reach her some day.

"……no"

Shidou stopped his legs and made a small swing with his head in denial.

Thinking back on it, Shidou's assumption might be too much. A small regret pierced his heart.

Even if she is able to use her transforming abilities, it does not mean that her wounds have completely healed. She won't be let off easily if she was found by the AST or DEM wizards in that wounded condition.

If the reason for Natsumi's hurried escape was because of Shidou and the rest then……thinking like that, his thoughts would always head to a dark direction.

"……This is not good, if this keeps up……"

Shidou pulled his cheeks a little before regaining his composure and resumed walking.

He could see his house immediately after he did that. Shidou opened the gate while searching his pocket, and took out the key before inserting the key into the door keyhole.

"……..Hnn?"

However, Shidou wrung his neck. There was no feedback even though he twisted the key. Feeling suspicious, he pulled the knob and the door opened without any resistance.

Without any mistake, he has locked the house before going out. But even so, he could not think of anyone that could come back home faster than Shidou.

"That's weird. Everyone should be underground now-------"

Shidou said it until there before opening his eyes wide.

"Natsumi…….!?"

Yes. Natsumi should know where the Itsuka house is. After Shidou opened the front door, he quickly took of his shoes and ran to the living room.

He then entered the living room and-----stopped his legs immediately.

Just like Shidou's predictions, there was one girl there.

But.

“Wha……..”

Shidou’s face was smeared with shock and lost his words.

“-----I beg my pardon, sorry for the intrusion”

The girl sitting on the sofa placed in the living room was completely different from the one Shidou assumed.

She has blue eyes and Nordic blonde hair as if it was constantly bathed in light.------Yes. DEM industry’s Wizard, the person called Ellen Mathers was there.

“Ellen!? Why are you here……..!”

“I have come to have a good talk. Please”

After saying that, she showed the opposite sofa. She is probably telling to sit.

“What are…….”

Shidou pretended to be hesitant with Ellen’s words while operating his cell-phone in his pocket. It was an emergency situation. He has to tell Kotori as soon as possible-------

“……”

“Wha……..”

But at that moment, just when he thought Ellen raised her right hand, Shidou's cell-phone floated out and glided mid-air towards Ellen's hand.

"It's not really inconvenient for me if you call for help but, it is annoying since it would disturb our talk. I am sorry but, I will be borrowing this for a bit"

Ellen placed the cell-phone she stole from Shidou on the table and sends her sights over.

"I'll tell you this just in case but, everything within this house is in my Territory (Reach). I don't recommend resisting"

"Kuh……."

Shidou clenched his teeth in detest before, making a small sigh and calmed his hips on the sofa opposite Ellen.

"……so, what does the supreme DEM-san have to do with me until they break into a house of a weak citizen"

At the very least of resistance, he said that with sarcasm. However Ellen did not really show any care about that and was staring straight at Shidou's eyes.

"There is nothing much. I just want to ask one simple question"

"Question?"

"Yes. I'll be straight forward and ask.-------- right now, where is the Spirit <Witch> you all ran off with a few days ago"

Ellen asked in a quiet voice. Shidou grasped his fist tightly.

"……, Don't screw with me! There's no way I would tell you that!"

Actually, Shidou wanted to tell her that but----he decided not to tell. He wanted to avoid letting this woman know that Shidou and the group let Natsumi ran away. Natsumi is able to distance herself away from danger, just by making her think that Natsumi was still under <Ratatoskr>'s protection.

However no matter how Shidou's voice raged, Ellen did not break her composed expression. She then continued her words in a calm fashion.

"Well, that's true. Even we thought you will not tell us that easily"

"……I see. Then please leave. I have to prepare dinner"

"You are the one making?"

"Got a problem with that?"

"No. I think it is wonderful"

"……..Well thanks"

When Shidou said that without even trying to hide his hostility, Ellen made a thin sigh before standing up from the sofa.

She then slowly walked around the living room and crawl her sights as if she was observing the condition of the room or kitchen before opening her mouth.

"------it's a little narrow but, it is a house that has been cleaned throughout. It makes me see people sitting around happily every night"

"……..……"

Shidou frowned his eyebrows while having no idea what Ellen' s words really meant. There is no way; the words she spat out literary meant what it meant.

However, Ellen act as if she does not care about Shidou's no reply and echoed her beautiful voice.

"I wonder who are inside that happy circle. You-----Itsuka Kotori, Yatogami Tohka, Yoshino, or maybe, the Yamai sisters and Miku might be in it too. How wonderful. Please take care of it properly"

"……..What do you want to say"

Becoming impatient, when Shidou asked her, Ellen turned her whole body to Shidou's direction. Maybe it's because her back is facing to the window, he could not see her expression for an instant because of the back lighting.

"--------Who do you think it is thanks to, for the existence of that happy circle?"

"What?"

Shidou brought his eyebrows closer at the sudden question.

"……..Well, it's thanks to Kotori and <Ratatoskr>------"

"You're wrong"

Without hearing the end of Shidou's answer, Ellen shows her denial.

"-------The reason why it is able to exist right now, is because of Ike and me. *We are letting you all off*, and letting you all live, that is why you all are able to enjoy this momentary peace"

"Wha……"

Shidou felt his back getting damp with sweat.

In Ellen words, there was totally no sign of jesting or joking.

She was saying that seriously. There was no sight of doubt held in that preposterous and violent logic.

"……."

Ellen is a wizard. Which means even though, there is a machine buried into her brain, she should be a human. But even so, why. Why does he feel a stronger odd feeling------no it should be called

foreign sensation, compared to the times he has a conversation with spirits.

"Let me give you a summary"

Ellen slowly lifted one of her hand and directed it Shidou. Even though it was such a simple action, Shidou felt that it was hard to breathe suddenly. Maybe she lowered the density of the oxygen nearby by manipulating her Territory, or she used it to press Shidou's nose and mouth, or maybe-----with just plain pressure, she overpowered Shidou.

"Itsuka Shidou, lined up with <Princess>, <Efreet>, <Hermit>, <Berserk> and <Diva>. For the compensation of the fore said, please tell me where is <Witch>"

"Do-don't screw-------"

"Please don't misunderstand. There is no compromise higher than this. You have no authority to choose"

"Guh……."

"-----Its simple mathematics. I will assure you the safety of the Spirits for now with only the <Witch>. I don't think this is such a bad deal"

Ellen said that as if that choice was the natural one to pick.

But. Shidou snorted after he took a deep breath.

"…….Sorry but, I've sucked at mathematics since I was young"

"I see. How regretful"

It seems Shidou's words were within her expected category. Without showing any slight signs of discouragement, Ellen carried her hand inside her jacket before, taking out a knife handle without the blade from there.

Shidou did not know what it was for a moment but-------at the same time with Ellen narrowing her eyes, he saw a faint glowing light appearing out from the tip of the handle before he gulped.

"Well then, I will have you slowly play along with me until you could do a proper calculation in profit and loss.------I wonder *how many numbers* you can handle, I am looking forward to it"

Ellen pointed her light blade towards Shidou while distorting her lips for the first time.

Part 4

"Point A has no response!"

"Same with Point B!"

"We have lost sensing the last small quantity of Reiha from the quarantine area half-way……..!"

15000 meters from Tenguu city, the airship <Fraxinus> was now floating in the sky. Right now in the bridge, the voices of the crews were flying around.

Yes. Right now, Kotori and the crew was using the observation installed in the <Fraxinus> at full strength, to chase after Natsumi' s disappeared reading.

But------The result is just as it looks.

"Tsk…….I predicted this already but, the Reiha response can't be pursued like I thought"

Kotori clicked her tongue while placing her hand on her chin and sitting on the commander seat.

As long as they are unable to sense the reiha readings, the automated cameras thrown into the city would normally be the main search method but-------it did not have much meaning against Natsumi since she holds the power to transform. While being aware of the fact she was being an escapee, there is no way

she would be in an easily detected appearance for Kotori and the crew. If she disguises herself as one of the passerby then, it is close to impossible to find her.

“This is bad……it would be good if she would harass Shidou again but, if she were cautious of us and will not show herself then------it would be impossible to seal Natsumi’s Reiryoku ”

After Kotori said that difficultly, she then gave a command to the crew working at the lower bridge.

“-------Looking for her without any clue is inefficient. Focus on the places Natsumi has appeared before and search there. The ruined amusement park Shidou first met Natsumi, my house, Shidou’s school and also, the mountain we safeguarded Natsumi”

“Roger!”

At the same time with the crews reply, the images of the city shown on the monitor started to move all at once.

And at that moment.

“……..hnn?”

Facing towards her personal display, Minowa let out a doubtful voice.

“What’s wrong? Don't tell me, it’s Natsumi’s response!?”

“N-no, it’s not that but…….”

"What your enunciation is bad. Just what is it?"

"Haah……..Could you look at this?"

After Minowa operated the console, the screen Minowa was looking at, was displayed on the ships main monitor.

On the top part of the observation range which was expanded to its maximum scale to search for Natsumi------at the end of the sky, there was one strange reading confirmed there.

"…….What is this?"

"Judging from the high speed and orbit, it is thought to be an artificial satellite or something……."

Kawagoe looked at the screen while saying that. Kotori *fumu* groaned while bringing her sights to Nakatsugawa.

"Could you bring out the image"

"Hah, please wait a second…….!"

Nakatsugawa operated the console and a speck like dot was shown on the screen.

After that was expanded a few stages up, the rough resolute image was shown out.

"It's true that……it looks like an artificial satellite. But, why is it alone……."

But at that moment, Mikimoto raised his eyebrows and started staring at the screen.

“It is just slight but, there is Maryoku readings there! What’s more this is……..explosion arts…….?”

“What did you say?”

Kotori brought her eyebrows closer. Explosion arts. Speaking in easy terms, it is a magical bomb prepared with the Realizer.

“What is going on. Why is such a thing at-----“

After saying that, Kotori placed her hands on her mouth.

“Don’t tell me…….no, there is no way they would use such a stupid-------“

“Co-commander…….is something wrong?”

Nakatsugawa fixed his glasses position while asking. Kotori gulped before continuing her words.

“If……..only if. What do you all think would happen if the artificial satellite falls to Tenguu city?”

“…….!!”

At Kotori words.

All of the crew members lost their words at once.

Part 5

"……"

The taste of salt expanded inside his mouth. The sweat dropping down his cheeks reached until his tongue through his lips.

While Shidou was being pointed with a laser edge by Ellen, he searched his thoughts to find a way to break through this situation somehow.

But, Ellen did not show any chances at all. Shidou's legs would probably be skewered in an instant if he showed any signs of running away then.

As if she guessed Shidou's thoughts, Ellen made a soft snort.

"It's useless. There is only one way for you to be able to leave this place alive. It is to spit out <Witch>'s whereabouts"

"…….sorry I have been forgetting a lot recently"

"I will make you remember back then"

After saying that, Ellen slowly walked closer until she reached right in front of Shidou.

"Guh……."

He tried to withdraw his legs back to gain distance at the very least but-----his body won't move. It seems, Ellen used her Territory to bind Shidou's body.

"Well then-----Going with the fingers isn't artistic. So let's see……"

Ellen licked her lips before, bringing the laser edge she was holding closer to the side of Shidou's head. It's as if--------yes, she was going to chip off his ears.

"-----Tentatively, I'll ask for the last time. You are not planning to tell me <Witch>'s whereabouts right?"

Ellen sends a cold glint in the eye while saying that. Shidou felt his heartbeat getting faster until it hurts.

This woman would do it. Without any inch of hesitation, she would drop Shidou's ears. He recalled back the memories of being in pain pierced through by her and his legs trembled bit by bit.

But. After Shidou made the side of his lips to the shape of a smile, he then said it in a void as if he was holding down his trembling somewhere. "…….My ears are just about itchy"

"I see"

After Ellen said that shortly, she immediately narrowed her eyes and inserted strength into the hand holding the laser edge.

But-------at that instant.

"……!"

Placed on the table, Shidou's cell-phone's rhythmical ringtone echoed and Ellen probably got distracted by that too. In an instant, his body movement which was taken away from her territory could move. He heard from Kotori before that, no matter how skilled a person is, maintaining the Territory without a wiring suit requires a scary amount of concentration.

"Fuu---------!"

If he let this go, there won't be any more chance. Shidou put strength into both his hands and pushed Ellen's chest.

"Guh!"

Ellen made an anguish expression and fell backwards. Shidou sent a thought of thanks to the person that called him with excellent timing while quickly running away from the spot.

However, just about the time he was about to leave the living room, his body once again could not move.

"Wha…….."

"……You've done it"

While mixing in a silent anger in her voice, Ellen slowly raised her body.

Following by time, 3 seconds has not passed. In that small interval, Ellen redeployed her Territory. What scary concentration.

"-----okay, although it is a coincidence, how are you going to pay the fine for making me fall on the floor?"

"Kuh-----"

"Also, you touched my breast just now. Please die"

"That was inevitable!?"

Although Shidou raised a shriek, Ellen did not pay attention to that. She once again, brought the laser edge closer to his face.

But at that moment, this time, Ellen's cellphone started making low vibrating sound.

Ellen twitched her eyebrows before, taking out her phone while maintaining her Territory.

"-----Yes, it's me. Is there something"

Ellen received the call while not releasing her sights from Shidou but------

"……..what did you say?"

Just what kind of information did she hear; her expression suddenly turned stern.

"…….yes, yes. I understand. We will deal with it"

After saying that and turning off her phone, she showed a few seconds of hesitation before releasing the Territory binding Shidou ’s body.

“Uwah……..!?”

It was as if his support was suddenly released. Shidou broke his balance and pitched forward on the spot.

“What a lucky person”

“Huh……..?”

When Shidou went blank, Ellen did not even take a glance at Shidou and ran outside the house just like that.

“Wha-what……on earth”

Left alone in the living room, Shidou was dumbfounded for a while----at that moment, he noticed his cellphone was still echoing the ringtone. After he walked over to it and saw the screen, he found out Kotori’s name was displayed.

“Hello? Kotori? Listen to this, just now-------“

“You pick up late! What were you doing at this crisis!”

When Shidou picked up the phone, Kotori’s loud voice echoed.

“Wha-what is it. Even I was having a big problem here”

“Forget it, please calm down and listen”

Kotori said it in a serious voice. Shidou wanted to mumble his dissatisfaction but, he brought his eyebrows closer at that unusual manner.

“What, did something happen?”

“…….yes. It’s so sudden so it’s unbelievable but------“

At that point, Kotori corrected her breathing before continuing the rest.

“------10 minutes after now, an artificial satellite will fall onto Tenguu city”

Fall down

Chapter 10: Despair Is Falling

Part 1

"Tsk-----"

After Ellen clicked her tongue in contempt, she condensed her Territory and dashed on the ground with crazy speed. After Ellen cut across the road, all the pedestrians opened their eyes in shock but, she had no time to pay attention to that. She was just single-mindedly continuing running to her target spot.

Her course was east---------the direction of the hotel Westcott was lodging at.

With this speed, the time needed to reach was------around 30 minutes. She does not know exactly what time until the [Impact] but, thinking about distancing from Tenguu city after that, was definitely something not reassuring.

"-----I have no choice"

Ellen sharpens her sights before making an order in her brain.

In an instant, Ellen's body made a pale glow and her whole body was equipped with the platinum CR-unit <Pendragon> in an instant. Compared to a few seconds ago, an even thicker maryoku compiled Territory was deployed.

Ellen kicked the ground and activated the thrusters attached to her back before flying high up into the sky. She then made a straight line towards her targeted location just like that.

At that moment, a call came from the in-cam internally equipped in the unit.

“Ex-executive chief Mathers! Just what is happening!?”

It was the subordinate she made to stand-by outside when Ellen entered the Itsuka house. She was probably surprised because Ellen ran out of the house suddenly. Ellen maintained her sights in front while, improving her speed and replied back.

“It’s an emergency. Currently, the artificial satellite <DSA-IV> which was planned to be disposed is now falling directed at Tenguu city. What’s more, its coming from -------“

After hearing the continuous explanation, her subordinate let out a astonished voice.

“Wha……..even if it is to defeat the Spirits, why would they do that…….! And what’s more, for the executive chief to not be informed about that plan is-------“

“No, the aim isn't the spirits, it’s Ike”

“Huh……..!? Wes-Westcott MD……!? What does that mean!?”

The subordinate said that in a shocked manner. Well, it was only normal. That's because the blade DEM is holding, is now directed at its top.

"There was contact from the HQ just now. It seems the board directors that brought out the dismissal request on Ike a few days ago is running wild"

After she said that, Ellen clicked her tongue. ***------like I thought, I should have chopped off their heads instead of their arm at that time.***

In the end, just moments before the execution of the plan, it seems a member of the board got scared of Westcott and leaked out the information to the 2nd executive team. It's not like that decision cannot be called smart but--------if he wanted to sell-out the plan, it would be better if he done it sooner. Ellen felt like cursing.

Nonetheless, now wasn't the time to do something like that. She has to secure Westcott as fast as possible and get far away as possible from here.

"------I am heading towards Ike. Every one of you, please evacuate so that you all won't get dragged into the blast. After that , look out for Reiha readings in the surroundings and if you find a spirit dragged in the explosion then, retrieve the saphira crystal from her"

"Ro-roger…….!"

Leaving that reply, her subordinate cut the line.

Nonetheless, she isn't really expecting anything related to the spirits. As long as they are involved with <Ratatoskr>, the < DSA-IV> would be detected before it reach the danger air zone anyway, and if that happens, all they have to do is to secure the Spirits with the airship before running to a safe zone. Most likely, Itsuka Shidou's phone that rang just now was also probably to inform him about this too.

"……"

And, flying halfway in a straight line in the sky. Ellen twitched her eyebrows.

The reason was simple. Coming from everywhere, Uuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuu-------the sound of the siren started to ring in her ears.

"Spacequake alarm……don't tell me, a spirit?"

She mumbled that but however, she noticed another possibility.

---no matter how much a bother Westcott is, if they drop an artificial satellite on Japan's city then no matter if it is DEM company, they would not get off easily. If that is the case then, the board of directors would not achieve the goal of taking over the company.

The case is that, the board members are planning to blame this disaster all onto the spacequake. **I see**, it was a logical thought.

"I won't let them"

After Ellen grinded her teeth, she headed to Westcott at her maximum speed.

Part 2

No time at all after Ellen left the house, the space quake alarm echoed throughout the city and the sound of the residence nearby evacuating could be heard.

"Spacequake alarm!? At a time like this!?"

"No, you're wrong"

When Shidou looked out the window in shock, Kotori said that through the phone.

"We did not detect any shaking in the space nearby……It is a false information that occurred in this miraculous timing-------it's the work of someone that is planning to put the blame onto spacequake for all the damages from the falling artificial satellite"

"Blaming the spacequake……..wait, who would do that!?"

"…….It's most likely DEM company"

Kotori say that as if she was grinding her teeth. However, Shidou raised his eyebrows.

"Wai-wait a second. DEM……..? Isn't that impossible?"

"You sure say weird things. An organization that could do something like this, in terms of the ability to get things done and in terms of a health problem with a few screws loose in their heads, there is no one I can think of"

"Iyaa, it's true but……"

Shidou explained everything that happened just now.

About the fact that Ellen was there when he got home. And also -------the fact that Ellen ran out of the house, panicked.

"Ellen Mathers did that? It's true that it's weird……if this action is a plan to round up all the spirits then, there is no way she would not know about it……..no, even before that……."

Kotori groaned difficultly. However, she immediately noticed that now wasn't the time to be immersed in thought. She regained her composure and continue her words.

"Anyway! There is no mistake it will be dangerous if you stay there. We will pick you up with <Fraxinus> immediately so, please come outside"

"A-aah…… how about Tohka and the rest?"

"No need to worry. The preparations to escape from the underground just got ready. We will immediately head there after we pick up Shidou"

"I get it. Then------"

Shidou then wrung back his neck when he was about to reply.

"Escape from underground? Doesn't that facility have the endurance equal to that of the shelters?"

When Shidou said that, Kotori took a breather as if she was leaving a beat before replying.

"------Yes, that's right. If the spacequake is until rank B then it will almost unmistakably withstand it"

"……..wait a second. That means-----"

"Thinking normally, there should not be a problem. But, there is something bothering me"

"Something bothering you……?"

"Yes. ------we detected slight Maryoku readings coming from the concerned artificial satellite"

Shidou raised his eyebrows at Kotori's words.

"Wha-what does that mean?"

“We still don’t know the details. But-------it is hard to think that DEM is just going to let the artificial satellite’s wreckage fall . We think that they are going to make it breakthrough the atmosphere using some kind of method. You should prepare for the worst scenario”

“The worst……scenario”

“……yes. The shelters that have started to be deployed in the world since 30 years ago, was something mainly set for the damages from the spacequake. Basically, since it is observed that spacequakes often occurs, above ground, above sea, and the sky, the possibility to escape the damages by just hiding underground is high”

But, Kotori continued.

“The case this time is a different story”

“If that artificial satellite falls straight onto the shelter then…… …….are you saying the people inside won’t be saved!?”

“……like I said, we still don’t know the details. But, please understand the fact that this possibility exist”

“……..! Wha-what the hell! Just because they are aiming for the Spirits, isn’t this just overboard……!”

After Shidou shouted while clenching his fist, Kotori once again groaned difficultly.

“I still don’t get-----that point”

“……eh?”

“The DEM too should know that we have an airship. If they were to aim for the spirits then, I don’t think they would take this method which has no certainty”

“The-then, what does this mean……..”

“I can’t say anything at this stage. Maybe there is an idiot in the higher ups that could not get to that decision or, they straight off lost their minds, or maybe------they have another goal”

“Goal……”

Shidou gulped. Just what on earth is that [Goal] they have to achieve even if thousands of victims are produced?

“-----I understand your feelings but, please hurry now. We are losing time until the crash just by doing this”

Kotori said that impatiently. However, Shidou stayed still.

“Wa-wait a second. Is there any way!? If this keeps up, even if we are saved, the people in the city will-----“

“Please listen to the end”

Kotori flat out said that as if to interrupt Shidou’s words.

"Even I don't feel like seeing everyone in the city die. I have a way"

"! Re-really!?"

"Yes. ------it's simple. Just before the artificial satellite crashes, we will shoot it down with <Fraxinus> main cannon. If we do that, even if by any chance the explosion arts activates, and the blast or fragments pours down to the ground, the shelter below should be safe…….well, the surface might become something nasty but, it is the same with the spacequake, they have to be grateful that they got saved even though it is only their life. We will let the JGSDF's restoration team, work hard handling the rest"

"I see…….if that's the case!"

"Satisfied? Now hurry up"

"Aah!"

Shidou strongly nodded before cutting the phone call and headed to the front entrance and putting back on his shoes.

And------at that moment, *Koron* something tumbled down from Shidou's pocket because he was leaning over to wear his shoes.

"Hn……?"

When he looked over to it, he found out that it was a chupa chups wrapped with a red wrapper.-----it was something Natsumi dropped when she was disguising herself as Kotori in the underground facility.

"Ah------"

The moment he saw that. Shidou reached a certain thought. He froze on the spot for a few moments and became dumbfounded.

That's right. Shidou has forgotten something. It's true that the residence in the neighbourhood has evacuated to the shelter because of the spacequake. Everyone would be safe if <Fraxinus> succeeds in shooting down the artificial satellite.

But-------there is one person. Still escaped from underground, there is only one person that might still be left on the surface.

When Shidou stopped at the front entrance, the sound of a rhythm started to echo from his cell phone again. After he pressed the call button, he could hear Kotori's voice which has irritation mixed in.

"Hey, what are you doing Shidou. I told you there is no time ……."

"Kotori"

Kotori said it in impatience, and then stopped. Maybe she felt something was up with Shidou, Kotori continued her words in doubt.

“What is it, what happened?”

“Aah. There is something I want to ask you to do……could you retrieve Tohka and the rest first?”

“Huh? Why again.-------aah, are you perhaps referring to *take everyone else to a safer place first before me*? You don’t really have to worry about that, since we will properly retrieve everyone”

“No……there is still something on the surface I have to do no matter what”

When Shidou said that, Kotori [Haaa!?] echoed a voice filled with anger.

“I told you this is an emergency, didn’t you get the message!? I don’t know what you have to do but, its not worth risking your life for! First and foremost-----“

“It’s Natsumi”

“……..uh”

Kotori gasped at Shidou’s words.

“You all still haven’t find Natsumi right…….?”

Yes. It would be a big problem if she is still on the surface.

A normal person would run to the shelter when the spacequake alarm rings. That is only normal. But for Natsumi who is a spirit,

he has no idea whether or not she would obey that alarm. Natsumi was locked up in the underground facility in the first place, so he doesn't think that Natsumi would want to go back into the shelter once again, with her own will because it's underground.

"That's……but, even Natsumi isn't stupid! Even if she does not enter the shelter, there is a possibility that she has already run far away---------and even if the blast and fragments of the artificial satellite falls down, she is a spirit you know!? She can protect herself from something like that!"

"That might be the case. But…….Natsumi's wounds she got from Ellen should not be healed completely yet. There might be chance"

"……uh"

Kotori groaned softly before, falling silent. As If he was making a supplication, Shidou let out his voice to Kotori who was on the other side of the phone.

"I beg you……Can you let me search for Natsumi until the last minute? It might be running with no reason. No……that possibility is probably high. But, as long as Natsumi is being exposed to danger, I can't just……keep quiet"

When Shidou said that while clenching his fist, Kotori continued being silent for a while before-----

"……..haaa"

Like that, she made a sigh as if she given up.

"…….I understand. Rather, you won't listen anymore even if I say anything"

"Kotori…….!"

"However, the time limit is until we finish preparing our intercept attack. I won't allow any longer than that. Also, you have to put on your Incam so we can contact you anytime"

"Aah, I get it"

"Then, hurry up and go. We will try to use the remaining automatic cameras to find Natsumi's whereabouts too. Well, it'll be a problem if you expect something though"

"Roger…….! Kotori!"

"What"

"Thanks"

When Shidou said that, Kotori *fuun* snorted through the phone.

"……..That is my line. I panicked and lost sight of something important. I am counting on you, Shidou"

After Shidou tilted his head forward, he put the chupa chups that fell in the corridor into his pocket and went outside the house.

Maybe the evacuation of the residence in the neighbourhood was almost done; almost no sight of anyone could be seen on the road. The only thing left was a hint of the presence of many people just a little while ago; it was such a miraculous silence. Shidou has walked in the city with no one in it many times to have a conversation with the spirits but, no matter how many times he experience this, as expected he could not bring himself to like this kind of weird feeling.

But, now was not the time to be making wry smiles. Shidou ran on the street while taking deep breaths, he then raise his voice as if to make an echo in the surroundings.

"--------Natsumi!!!"

Shidou's voice echoed throughout the unnaturally quiet residential area of the city. But of course-------there was no reply.

However, that was within his predictions. Shidou did not bother about that and continued shaking his throat.

"If you are nearby, listen to me! From now, countless artificial satellite fragments will fall around this whole area! It's dangerous to stay on the surface! You have to hurry up and evacuate! That's why, even if it is just for a little time! Please come with me! We won't lock you inside a room! Once everything ends, you can go anywhere you like! That's why!"

Shidou's shout echoed in the city street of the residential area, and vanished nearby. There was no reply as expected.

But, Shidou did not think this was a useless action.

He has no idea where Natsumi is. Just like Kotori said, she might already run away to another place, or she might have mixed in with the residents and went underground already.

However, if she is still up on the surface---------and what's more if she is in Tenguu city then, he stumbled upon a possibility that in order to have revenge for being confined underground, she might be examining Shidou while hiding somewhere.

Betting on that small possibility, he continued shouting.

"I don't mind if you don't have to like me! Please hide in the shelter with the citizens or run away to another city as fast as possible! Worst comes to worst------you can run to the other world! Anyway, it's dangerous to stay in this city! I beg you! Get away from here!"

Shouting while running has forced a huge burden on his lungs. Even though he did not advance that far off, his lungs hurt and it was hard for him to breath.

But, Shidou did not stop his legs. Maybe, Natsumi wasn't hiding around these parts.

In order for Shidou's voice to reach Natsumi, he once again took a deep breath.

Part 3

"------Natsumi! I beg you! Reply back if you can hear me!"

Shidou was shouting for the unknown number of time while running in the empty city.

"……"

Natsumi silently heard that voice.

Mostly likely, Shidou still thinks that the escapee Natsumi is still nearby and what's more in a place which she can observe him. ---------actually, that thought is correct.

"Natsumi! Natsumi! Are you here!? Natsumi!"

Shidou's imploring voice echoed in the city.

His voice was dried out and his breathing was faint. He looked very pathetic.

However, Shidou did not stop shouting. When he tripped over a stone, he would immediately stand up afterwards and would start shouting Natsumi's name over and over again.

---Why would you go that far.

Just moments before Natsumi was about to spill those words, she stopped.

It's not like she thought Shidou would find out her position if she let out her voice. It's just simply; she knew the answer without even letting out those words.

---why?

It's obviously to save Natsumi.

Fragments of an artificial satellite will fall in this area. What Shidou was saying was most likely the truth. Looking at the residence in the surroundings evacuating, there is no mistake there is some kind of disaster predicted.

Of course if that is the case then, it is possible to think that the organization backing Shidou and the rest, rang the alarm to draw Natsumi out but------listening to the slight sounds coming from Shidou and Kotori phone just now, that possibility is denied.

Shidou did not consider about the danger towards him and with a reason of, Natsumi might still be left behind; he remained alone in a city with no one in it.

"Uu……."

When she thought about that, a weird feeling once again expanded inside Natsumi's chest.

It was fluffy, whirly, and irregular, and it felt disgusting.

---The first time Natsumi came over to this world silently. No one in this world would look at Natsumi.

Natsumi hated that very much. She wanted to be talked to; she wanted to be bothered and wished to be acknowledged by someone. That's why------she used <Haniel>'s power to remake her own appearance.

When Natsumi transformed into a beautiful one-san, everyone became gentle to her. Everyone would fawn over Natsumi and would listen to her words. But-------no matter how many times it repeated, Natsumi's heart was not satisfied.

In the end, no one would look at Natsumi. In the end, no one would acknowledge Natsumi. That feeling only gets stronger, the more she gets pampered.

But right now, the one Shidou was looking for was the [Real Natsumi] that no one acknowledged.

---He tried to find the Natsumi who was ignored by everyone.

"……"

Events that occurred one after another floated in her head.

The fact Shidou protected her when Ellen attacked her.

The fact everyone transformed Natsumi.

The fact he made me think I was cute.

---And the fact he acknowledged someone like me.

"…….don't tell me, I"

She didn't have to think about it anymore.

Natsumi-----does not want Shidou to die.

Without her noticing, she didn't really bother anymore about the fact that he saw her secret. More importantly, she was very happy that someone would look properly at her real self.

"------Natsumi!"

"……..., ……."

At that moment her name was just called, and she almost let out her voice in an instant.

She did not really mind if her voice comes out. If that happens, Shidou will definitely find Natsumi. It would be better if they both ran to a safer place.

However, now that Natsumi is aware of that, she has no idea what she should do with the new emotions she now holds.

"I-it will be alright……alright"

She mumbled that in a soft voice so that she won't be detected by Shidou.

Even Shidou would evacuate once the fragments are going to fall. Worst case, there is no mistake that the organization behind him will do something about it like when they saved Natsumi.

Natsumi chanted [It's going to be alright, It's going to be alright] in her heart as if to let herself hear it while, praying for Shidou to give up looking for Natsumi as fast as possible and evacuate to a safer place.

Part 4

"Coming from the D3 underground facility, Tohka-chan and the rest have been retrieved!"

"Retrieval of the 13 accompanying organization members is complete!"

"The wall of the facility is closed with the remote control!"

After swallowing Shidou's suggestion, it has been almost 20 minutes since sending him out to the empty city. Kotori opened her lips after confirming the report of the crew echoing in the bridge.

"Okay------How about Shidou's current position?"

"Yes, Shidou-kun is currently running towards the northern main street at the 3rd district. It seems he is heading towards the school"

"How about Natsumi from the automatic camera?"

"Sadly, we have not found her"

"I see"

Kotori made a short reply. She did not think it would be that easy to find Natsumi who holds the power of transformation in the first place.

And,

"! Commander! The artificial satellite has started falling!"

Normally, when an artificial satellite falls, it would gradually fall off orbit and while turning around the earth's surroundings, it would slowly lower its altitude from the influence of the gravity and atmosphere before burning up when it breaks through the great atmosphere.

But in the icon shown in the monitor, coming from the satellite orbit, it was falling straight towards earth as if there was something pulling it in a vertical line.------it's was clearly abnormal .

"------It's here huh"

After Kotori licked her lips, she brought forward her hand and made an order to the crew.

"Calculate the fall prediction point immediately! Parallel activate the Ar-008, and machine no.3 to no.5, also please make it so that <Mystletainn> could be fired! After we retrieve Shidou, we will then move to the interception point and destroy the target!"

Normally, pin pointing the falling point of the artificial satellite precisely is very difficult. But, if they use the calculative power of the AI installed in the <Fraxinus> then it is possible to calculate the falling point with a few kilometers error.

"Roger! Ar-008, no.3, no.4, no.5, has started generating Maryoku!"

"The predicted point of the fall is out! It is aim precisely at the vicinity of east Tenguu in the Tenguu city!"

After she heard Mikimoto's report, Kotori clicked her tongue.

"Tsk, Shidou's position is unexpectedly near"

The only time when they are able to use the <Fraxinus> teleporter device, is when the target is right underneath without any obstructions. Which means; they must move directly on top of that target if they want to retrieve someone on the ground.

But nonetheless, as long as there is a fear of the explosion arts activating at the same time with the interception, it's not a good plan for the <Fraxinus> to be too close to the target. After retrieving Shidou at the area near the impact predicted point, there came the need to take distance once again to prepare for interception.

"What's the limit of the time after we move to Shidou's retrieval point?"

"Estimated to be……5 minutes 30 seconds!"

"It's a little off, thinking its preparations for an interception attack. Please pick up the pace"

"Roger!"

At the same time with Kawagoe's reply, the bridge was wrapped with a low tone motoring sound-------<Fraxinus> that was remaining still in the air started moving.

After recognizing that, she made more orders.

"Connect a line to Shidou"

"Roger"

Nakatsugawa operated the console. And then, at the edge of the monitor, Shidou who was running around the city while finding Natsumi was shown out.

She pulled the mike closer to her mouth and sends her voice to Shidou's Incam.

"Shidou, can you hear me?"

Shidou in the screen then made a small reaction and stopped his legs.

"…….a-ahh……I can, hear you……."

Pressing the incam with his fingers, Shidou replied back while breathing heavily. His voice was raspy just like when someone gets a cold. It seems he has been running the whole time while continuously calling out to Natsumi.

She hesitated to say the next word when she looked at Shidou like that. But, she could not allow him to keep on looking for Natsumi. She swing her head a little to regain her composure before letting out her voice at the mike.

“Sadly, it is time limit. We will head there to pick you up so, don’t move from that spot”

“Wha……Time…….already…….!? I beg you, a little more-----“

“No. you promised”

“Bu-but”

Shidou implored back. Kotori *crack* bit her chupa chups.

“Don’t make me say it again……..inside the lives you want to protect, please properly add yours in it too”

When Kotori said that, Shidou kept quiet for a while before making a soft sigh.

“……, ……I understand. Sorry, for being so selfish”

"Not really. I am used to it"

After Kotori fluttered her hands while saying that, she then looked back at the monitor.

At that moment when she did that, the buzzer that announces an emergency started echoing from the speaker installed in the bridge.

"Uh, what happened!?"

"Thi-this is……The falling speed of the artificial satellite is suddenly rising!"

"What did you say……!?"

The same time with Kotori raising her eyebrows, the fore said artificial satellite was showed out in the monitor. It's square frame type with solar panels attached to both its sides. In a fashion of cramping the upper part, there was some kind of unshapely round object clinging onto it. It seems one part of it was serving as a thruster. It is clearly not a normal artificial satellite.

"Kuh……what's that…….!?"

Kotori opened her eyes wide and let sweat flow down her cheeks. It seems they seriously went that far to cause huge damage when it falls. Or maybe-----they foresaw that <Fraxinus> was in the Tenguu city, and was cautious of an interception.

No matter which one is correct, there is no mistake that this situation is something not good for Kotori and the group. She hit

the commander seats handrail while standing up and bounced her voice at the lower bridge.

"Hurry with the correction of the predicted arrival time! What's the time!?"

"……., ……., the predictions are out! Jud-judging by these values, we won't make it if don't enter interception now!"

"Kuh……!"

Kotori distorted her face painfully. But, she immediately immersed herself in thoughts and

"…….Shidou, sorry but there's a problem with the plan"

"Eh?"

"We cannot go pick you up anymore. ------but, if we intercept the artificial satellite, there should be no damage done underground. Please hurry to evacuate to the a nearby shelter"

"------, aah, I get it. Don't worry about me. -----I am counting on you"

He probably guessed the situation from Kotori's voice. Shidou did not ask anything extra and said that. Kotori restrained her trembling voice while [Yes] making a nod before cutting the transmission.

"Co-commander……."

"……There is no problem. More importantly, please hurry with the preparations for interception.-------we have to accurately shoot it down"

"Ro-roger!"

The crew shouted and operated their consoles. <Fraxinus> changed its course and headed towards the interception point.

"……kuh"

Kotori grinded her teeth and clenched her fist.

Kotori's decision was supposed to be right. If they prioritize retrieving Shidou there, it will make it impossible to intercept for < Fraxinus> and in result, many people will lose their lives. But-------

"----commander!"

And after some time of thinking, Shiizaki's voice shook Kotori's eardrum.

"We reached the interception point!"

"The target will pass the prescribed point in 30 seconds!"

"Ar-008 has finished loading the Maryoku! We can go anytime! "

The voices of the crew echoed in the bridge. Kotori swung her head to throw off any unnecessary idle thoughts before, staring straight at the monitor.

And as if to match with the countdown displayed in the corner of the screen, she followed the numbers by counting in her heart too and when the target fell into the screen perfectly------she raised her voice.

"-------<Mystletainn>! Fire!"

At the same time with Kotori's shout, a strong torrent of Maryoku was shot out from the <Fraxinus> cannon.

The giant cluster of Maryoku released from the giant Realizer installed inside the airship headed towards the target shown in the middle of the screen and swallowed it up.

It was in a perfect timing. There were even some in the crew that made a guts pose even though they haven't checked it was shot down or not.

But-------

"Wha…….!?"

In the next moment, Kotori made an unbelievable face while raising a dismayed voice.

However that was only natural. The moment the convergence Maryoku cannon reached straight at the artificial satellite, it distorted and only pierced one side of the solar panel and thrusters before disappearing into the sky.

Although the artificial satellite loses its balance because it flicked away the maryoku cannon-------it then continued falling down as if it was pulled down by gravity like that.

“Wha-what was that……!”

“It is most likely, a Territory……..”

Kannazuki standing beside the commander seat was the one who answered Kotori’s shout. He placed his hands on his chin and *Fuumu* groaned. “Territory you say……..!?”

Kotori shouted and-------at that moment, she found a weird point inside the artificial satellite inside the image.

The round object that got pierced through by the <Mystletainn> .

Inside it, a familiar looking face peeped out.

“That’s……<Bandersnatch>……..!?”

Yes. The DEM’s mechanical doll <Bandersnatch>. More specifically, it was a unit quite similar to it. It was able to use the Realizer without the assist of a Wizard, and thus is able to deploy the Territory; it was the DEM’s unmanned weapon.

That was completely docked onto the artificial satellite.

“Impossible-----they had such a method……..!”

Looking at that, Kotori understood the outline of this artificial satellite in an instant.

Most probably the DEM Company launched the custom type <Bandersnatch> from the ground and made it dock with the artificial satellite which was planned to be disposed of.

Even though it is an artificial satellite cruising with crazy speed, it is possible to seize it if it is a unit with a Realizer installed.

And having the <Bandersnatch> attached on it would mean-----it is possible to attach a Territory onto the artificial satellite.

"I see…….That's the reason why the artificial satellite is not damaged even a little when it breaks through the atmosphere ……!"

After Kotori clicked her tongue in detest, she heard the sound of Reine fiddling the console.

"……This is not a good situation. If an artificial satellite with this size crashes down while maintaining that mass, the high-rank explosion arts owned by DEM, and what's more all of that would be amplified by the Territory made by the <Bandersnatch>……….."

Kaa the sound of a key was produced and a number was shown on the screen.

"……..I don't know the exact numbers so, it would just approximate but…..most likely, it would be equal to a tactical nuke "

"……!!"

Hearing those words, Kotori gasped.

She planned to expect the worst case scenario but------in reality, it crossed her assumptions by a lot. If something like that falls, the Tenguu city would wholly turn into scorched earth.

And inside them, Kannazuki was the only one making a difficult face while stroking his chin.

"-----it's weird"

"What is"

"No, it is unthinkable that the Territory generated by the Realizer from the installed <Bandersnatch> would deflect < Mystletainn>"

"Then what is……no, anyways, striking it down now is our first priority! Reload the Maryoku! We have to do it before the artificial satellite reaches the ground------Kyaaa!?"

In an instant, the <Fraxinus> frame shook intensely and Kotori cut her voice.

"What happened!?"

"It's a bombardment! The Realizer has reduced by 15 percent!"

"A bombardment……..?"

"The image is out!"

At the same time with Minowa's voice, the image of the sky was shown out in the monitor. Wondering when it appeared, an airship bigger than <Fraxinus> was floating there. Even though it was organized in a straight line, it has a frame which makes them think it was somewhat coordinated. DEM's common, eerie weapons could be seen on it.

"That's----the DEM's"

"Kuh……..so that's the reason why our cannon attack was averted"

Kotori clenched her teeth in regret. Most likely, they predicted that the artificial satellite would be intercepted by them.

They don't know the details of the enemy ship's performance but-------it's true that it was powerful enough to generate a spontaneous point with the Territory to avert the <Mystletainn >. They could not shoot down the artificial satellite unless they do something about that enemy ship. On the other hand, if they do that, the artificial satellite will fall to the ground.

"Commander……..!"

That result was probably easy to predict. The crew made horrified face while raising their face.

However. After Kotori made a sigh in a very calm manner, she once again sat back at the commander seat.

“Kannazuki, I will leave this to you.-----we will use the < Gungnir>”

When Kotori said that, everyone twitched their eyebrows.

“……are you alright with that, Kotori”

“Yes. It’s not like I am going to shoot it in my full form. And I can’t take away Shidou’s regenerative abilities now”

After Kotori answered Reine with that, she then brought her sights towards Kannazuki.

“Don’t miss this, Kannazuki”

“Leave it to me”

Kannazuki said that while standing straight. After Kotori nodded in satisfaction, she then placed the palm of her hand on the verification device attached to the side of the console.

When she did that, the commander seat Kotori was seating, slide back downwards as if it was being sucked to the ground.

And after a few seconds, Kotori who was sitting in the chair came out in an open area.

It was a round shaped space with a radius of 3 meters. Since the outside condition could be projected on the smooth curved wall in real time, she felt a delusion as if she was floating in the air.

But, Kotori does not have the leisure of enjoying a walk in the pleasant air now. After Kotori jumped off the commander seat, she stood in the middle of the circle and made thin exhales while calming her heart.

"Well then, let us begin.-----My war"

Inside the cage of her consciousness, she felt the reeling in of a thin thread.

She imaged a scorching hot fire covering her body.

Not long later, that imagination turned into reality and when Kotori thought a swirl of fire was covering her surroundings, it

turned into the shape of a magical raiment. And after that, the fire crawled up to Kotori's hair and-----horns of an oni[9E 1] appeared on the side of her head.

--Astral Dress. The absolute armor covering the Spirit.

There was once a time when, Kotori's reiryoku was sealed by Shidou but, thanks to her controlling her own mental state, it became possible to reverse the reiryoku from Shidou spontaneously.

Nonetheless, if she brings out 100 percent of her power then, there is a danger of her consciousness being eaten by that power. By ensuring her reiryoku to a certain level, she would close the pass deliberately and maintain a limit release astral dress.

"<Camael>"

After Kotori quietly said that, the flames concentrated in Kotori's hand and it turned into a giant battle-axe.

At that moment, an explosion echoed and the ship shook a little.

It was most likely because they received an attack from the foresaid enemy ship. It seems the protective territory was defending right now but, if more time was wasted, then <Fraxinus > would get damaged before the artificial satellite falls. Kotori hanged <Camael> while releasing her voice.

"----[Megido]!"

When she did that, the cylindrical shape of <Camael> changed and was equipped on Kotori's arm perfectly. The appearance was like-----a giant cannon. The giant cannon that did not look suitable on Kotori's small body, was equipped onto Kotori's right hand.

And at the same time, a giant connector like equipment descended in front of her. When Kotori then touched it with < Camael>'s tip, a small electronic sound was produced and < Camael> was linked towards the connector tightly.

"Let's do this, Kannazuki"

"Yes, anytime as you wish"

When Kotori said that, she could hear Kannazuki's voice from the speaker.

After acknowledging that, Kotori concentrated her mind and gathered her reiryoku in the Angel.

Yes. If it was able to flick off the convergence Maryoku cannon <Mystletainn> then, there was only one method left.

The Spirit Reiryoku cannon <Gungnir>.

Just like its name, she would convert the power of the Spirit and release a amplified mortality attack; it is <Fraxinus>'s strongest weapon.

---in the surrounding of her body,

"Now! Spirit Reiryoku cannon <Gungnir>!"

“Fire!!”

At the same time with Kannazuki’s voice echoing from the speaker, the Spirit cannon fired from the giant cannon located in the center of <Fraxinus>.

That was. It was something that could no longer be called a laser cannon or beam anymore.

Suffice to say-------a pillar.

The giant light pillar made up of thick reiryoku, extended out to the artificial satellite from <Fraxinus> like a straight line connecting.

If it was pierced with this cluster of reiryoku then, just what would happen to the target.

Immediately, that peerless illustration got shown.

The instant the cannon hit its target, the artificial satellite once again averted its course and had the Territory deployed on its surroundings.

But, after the <Gungnir> attack slaughtered that in an instant----------the artificial satellite that was falling to Tenguu city got annihilated without leaving any shadow or shapes left.

The explosion art. Countless fragments. All those predicted damages, got evaporated without a trance with that simple ultra-high output attack.

"-----Target, destroyed! It's a success!"

The crew's voice echoed through the speaker. After hearing that , Kotori fell to her knees on the spot.

"Haa……haa……"

A light headache and drowsiness attacked Kotori. Although it was a part, maybe because she used her spirit powers, a mysterious destructive impulse started licking Kotori's heart as if it was scorching it.

This was the reason why they could not frequently use < Gungnir> which holds absolute power. By any chance, Kotori's consciousness got eaten by that destructive impulse then, Kotori would become a threat to <Fraxinus>. Because of that, they could only fire the main cannon during really critical moments.

Kotori took a deep breath while erasing her angel and released her Astral dress. She then sat on the ground like that.

She then let out her voice to call out to the crew in the bridge.

"Good work. But we still can't rest. We have to do something about the enemy ship-----"

But, at that moment.

As if to interrupt Kotori's voice, a very loud emergency rang and echoed.

"……., what happened! Did the enemy ship do something!?"

"N-no! it's not! Thi-this is------"

At the same time the crew's words, the radar image got shown on a part of the wall showing the sky's scenery.

Looking at that readings shown on it------she gasped.

"Wha…….this is------another artificial satellite……..!?"

Yes. A reading similar to the one's that got annihilated has appeared on <Fraxinus>'s higher air again.

"Impossible-------are you saying the last one was a decoy…….!?"

Kotori distorted her face in detest.

Most likely the enemy prepared several artificial satellites in the beginning as they saw through the fact that they had an airship and they had a method to shoot down the artificial satellite. Kotori clenched her teeth before placing her hand on her knee and putting strength in it to stand up on the spot.

"Bring it on……! One more time…….!"

"……no, you can't, Kotori. Continous <Gungnir> would bring big burden to you and <Fraxinus>"

Just when Kotori hung her hand up to manifest her angel again, Reine said that softly.

In an instant, another sound of an explosion echoed and the ship shook harder compared to just now.

"Kuh……..!"

The attacks from the enemy ship probably increased. It was dangerous to stay defensive. Either they have to switch to retaliation or took evasive maneuvers.

It was the worst thinkable situation. Even now when the 2nd artificial satellite was falling towards the ground, they could not shoot the <Gungnir> and they are unable to shoot down that ship' s territory with <Mystletainn >'s output. No, even before that, if they were to concentrate their attacks onto the artificial satellite then, the <Fraxinus> would sink before that.

"Just what should we------"

When Kotori was lost in her decisions for a few moments, she could hear the door of the bridge opening from the speaker.

"Mu…….Wha-what is happening"

After confirming securing them just now, Tohka and the girls were the ones that entered the bridge. Maybe she saw the noisy bridge, the enemy ship shown n the screen and also the image of the 2nd artificial satellite continuing its fall; she echoed her voice in surprise.

“Ah-Ahnoo……..what is this…….”

“Uhhaa. Don’t you feel we are in a pinch?”

“Kuku……..how miserable. To think you would panic with something like this”

“Agree. You all should be calmer”

“Ah-re? Is that the artificial satellite we were told just now on the screen? Somehow…….it feels like it’s still falling though……..”

Following after Tohka, the next that entered the bridge were, Yoshino, [Yoshinon], Kaguya, Yuzuru, and Miku; all of them said that.

“Yo-you girls…….!”

After Kotori opened her eyes wide and answered back, Tohka replied in wonder.

“Kotori? Where are you? I don’t see Shidou but, what is…….”

Kotori gasped unintentionally at Tohka’s question.

Maybe she felt something from that Kotori manner, Tohka made her expression a little stern.

“-----Kotori, what’s wrong. Please tell me. Is there something we can help?”

“……”

Kotori silently clenched her teeth. The Spirits are targets to be protected. Even if there is a mistake, they should not send them to the dangerous surface.

But-----Shidou is on the ground.

If they find out that the artificial satellite is still falling then, Shidou, that kind brother would without a mistake oppose it.

Commander and sister.

Each position's intentions fought each other------ Kotori opened her lips half unconscious.

“Please…….everyone. That stupid……..my only Onii-chan …….save him……!”

Part 5

“Time limit……huh”

After the transmission from Kotori got cut, Shidou looked downwards and clenched his fist.

In an instant, he was about to ignore Kotori’s evacuation advice and the thought of resuming to find Natsumi scratched his mind.

Even if he gets heavily injured by the poured down artificial satellite fragments and blast, if it is Shidou who has Kotori's protection then, he would not die straight away and would probably resurrect back.

But, when he thought about that, Kotori's words revived in his mind.

(------inside the lives you want to protect, please properly add yours in it too)

"That's right……sorry, Kotori"

Shidou said that as if he re-thinks back, and raised his face.

He has been shouting while running around for this much. If Natsumi is observing Shidou then, she would probably run away after realizing the restless situation. He could only pray for that.

Shidou crawled his sights and, looked for the public shelter nearby. During the time when the spacequake alarm is announced, the electric signs and electric noticeboard would show the path to the nearest shelter.

After Shidou confirmed the direction to the nearest underground shelter, he once again raised a shout to his surroundings.

"---Natsumi! I will now evacuate to the underground shelter! If you don't know where the shelter is, then follow me!"

A reply……..there was none, like he thought.

"Okay!?"

Shidou prayed that his voice would reach Natsumi and ran towards to the shelter.

Since he ran around to find Natsumi, it was hard for him to breath, and his legs were in dull pain. But he could not stop. He does not know how much time he has left. If Kotori and the group were to destroy the artificial satellite then, an explosion would probably occur. Before that happens, he has to run inside the shelter------and if Natsumi was hiding herself while following Shidou then, Natsumi would probably be dragged into this too.

He appealed to his body which wants to stop and somehow manage to reach a nearby shelter.

Since quite some time has passed since the alarm was announced, the main entrance has already closed down. But, basically these types of public shelter would make an emergency entrance for late runners like Shidou. He moved towards that.

"Fuu…….made it"

Having reached the emergency entrance, Shidou made a small sigh before looking behind.

"Natsumi! it's over here! It's okay to hide yourself! Before the fragments fall------"

He then raised his chin for his voice to get through, before leaving a last appeal.

But.

“Eh…….?”

Shidou stopped his body there.

The reason was simple. When he raised his face, he saw some kind of small shadow coming from the rift of the clouds.

“That’s-----“

Shidou opened his eyes wide in surprise for an instant but, he immediately noticed its identity.-----It was the artificial satellite Kotori told him about.

“Oi, You’re joking right……?”

Shidou squeezed out his trembling voice from his throat.

That was only normal. That’s because, instead of thin fragments , right now the thing falling down to Tenguu city was-----a giant cluster of metal.

If that artificial satellite falls down the ground like that, the surrounding shelters won’t end up safe. He recalled back what Kotori said just now. Shidou felt something cold expanding in his stomach.

Don’t tell me, <Fraxinus> failed to shoot it down……..!? Shidou raised his voice towards the Incam in panic.

"Kotori! Oi, Kotori! What happened!?"

When he did that, he could hear a voice with noises mixed in from the Incam.

"-----dou!? Right now, with enemy ship……., ……. failed to shoot……, ……..right now-----"

"Eh!? Wha-what did you say!?"

He asked again but, at the same time he heard some kind of explosion, he could not hear anything anymore from the Incam.

He doesn't know the details. But, he could at least understand that there was some kind of emergency situation happening in the sky.

After Shidou gasped, he once again looked back at the sky.

That black boorish silhouette was slowly-----but certainly getting bigger.

"…….Damn it!"

After Shidou shouted that, he did not enter the shelter and ran away from that spot.

Even if he enters the shelter now, it would be meaningless if that artificial satellite remains un-destroyed and crashes down. The whole area would be scorch down because of the explosion arts and impact of the crash, and the people evacuated in the shelter would die too.

Tonomachi, Ai, Mai, Mii and his other classmates, his homeroom teacher Tama-chan-sensei, the neighbor he exchanges greeting with every morning, the people in the shopping district that are always kind to him……..countless lives would disappear in an instant.

"I won't let……..something like that happen……!"

He glared at the sky while shaking his throat and ran towards the bottom of the artificial satellite.

Shidou did not think he could do something with that giant artificial satellite with his powers alone in the first place. But, there was no one else that can move in the ground. If Shidou gives up then at that moment, everyone losing their lives would be definite. Shidou would never allow something like that.

"…….!"

But even so, the speed of the artificial satellite falling was crazy. it got bigger in a blink of an eye-----and the whole picture could be seen by Shidou eyes.

"Kuh…….!"

Shidou ran while grinding his teeth.

If this goes on----it would be no good. Even if he reached the point where the artificial satellite was going to fall to, it would end with Shidou and the city getting blasted off.

--Power.

It was essential to have a giant power strong enough to sink that embodiment of despair coming from the sky in one hit.

But even so, Shidou was human. A normal……...although he walks a life decorated with misfortune, he was still human in the end. Thinking logically, there was no way he would have that power.

But. Even if Shidou does not have it------if it's the Spirits powers that Shidou was borrowing then.

"I beg you……..there is only me! Please lend me your power……!"

After Shidou shouted, he thrust out his right hand. As if he wanted to cling onto something invisible.-----or possibly-----he grasped something.

And then. There was only one thing in his heart. He only pictured the wish of wanting to save everyone.

"-----I beg you……<Sandalphon>!"

At that instant when he did that, a dazzling light shined in Shidou's sights and------a feeling of holding something in his right hand was born. When the blinding light faded away, a giant sword giving off a pale glow appeared in Shidou's hand.

The Angel <Sandalphon>. It was the absolute sword Tohka holds.

"……..! I did it!"

Shidou raised his voice unintentionally. It was the angel that he has manifested many times until now. This was the first time he was able to hold <Sandalphon> by his own will.

"With this I could-----!"

After Shidou sharpen his sights, he stopped his legs and glared at the falling artificial satellite while making a stance with < Sandalphon> using both his hands.

He made a thin exhale and calmed his heart down. He threw away any unnecessary worries and only thought of protecting the people in the ground. Shidou then swung down <Sandalphon>---- and made a line towards the sky.

"Haaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa-----!"

Light overflowed out from <Sandalphon>'s blade and Shidou then extended it to the sky as if he was following swordsmanship. An absolute strike from the powerful Angel. No matter if the opponent has a territory put up; it should break easily in front of the Angel's slash.

But.

"Wha…….!"

Shidou opened his eyes wide.

The moment the strike Shidou released approached the artificial satellite, it then changed its direction unnaturally just before it hits and then extended to the sky just like that.

The artificial satellite was still going strong. It was spreading thunderous roars while, approaching the ground to annihilate Tenguu city.

"Damn…….! Once more-----"

After Shidou clenched his teeth, he once again lifted up <Sandalphon>. But at that moment, a strong pain ran through his body and fell to one of his knees after distorting his face in reflex.

"A-gah……..."

It's the price for using the power of Angels which is too much for humans. Shidou's whole body turned worn-out in just one swing.

Next off, a scorching feeling of him being thrown into fire attacked his body. It was the fire regenerative ability he gained by sealing Kotori's powers but, it half-forced heal Shidou's injured body.

"Guh-------!"

His faced was dyed in pain and he put in strength into his right hand to avoid dropping <Sandalphon>.

But, while he was doing that, the artificial satellite was still approaching to the ground. If he waits for his body to heal then,

everything would end before he could release the next strike. Inside the pain and heat which is almost causing him to faint, Shidou somehow managed to stand up with both his legs.

"Kuh, ah, ah ah…….!"

He lifted <Sandalphon> with all his might. However, the artificial satellite was already showing its giant appearance towards Shidou's sights. Most likely in another 10 seconds, the whole of Tenguu city would become scorched earth.

"A-Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhh!"

Shidou recklessly swung <Sandalphon>. But, there was no way he could use an angel after having lost his concentration. The point of <Sandalphon> sliced the sky fruitlessly and produced loud sounds when it touches the ground.

But, Shidou did not give up. He did not let go of <Sandalphon> even when his muscle fibers are torn, bones cracked and his whole body was burned in scorching heat due to it getting forcefully healed.

"The hell….I will let you…….!"

He put strength into his legs when he was about to fall.

The moment, if Shidou gives up, the people evacuated in the shelter will be killed. He would never let something like that ever happen.

“My…….city…….! Don’t you fall……..on ittttttttttttttt!”

Shidou mustered his strength into his whole body and swung <Sandalphon> down. The sword strike turned into light and stretched out to the artificial satellite as if to swallow it. But-----that strike could not even break the Territory.

--at that moment.

“……..!?”

Shidou suddenly twitched his shoulders.

The moment Shidou swung the sword, a cold wind suddenly blew passed by suddenly.

It was a sudden cold wind that feels like the arrival of winter. But immediately, Shidou noticed that he was familiar with that feeling.

“This is------“

Next, Shidou looked up at the sky and lost his breath.

The artificial satellite has stopped in a position just few hundreds meter from the ground.

No-----more specifically, a wind pressure blowing upwards like an updraft and a wall compiled with ice, just barely stopped the artificial satellite was approaching to the ground by emitting its thrusters.

“-----Shidou-san!”

A familiar voice echoed from behind. Shidou moved his painful body and turned around.

Over there, Yoshino clinging to an angel that looks like a giant rabbit was there.

“Yoshino……..why are you here!?”

“Kuku, Yoshino isn’t the only one”

“Unsatisfied. I wished you would see Yuzuru and Kaguya’s great effort”

He then heard 2 voices coming from the sky next. When he looked over, he found out that the Yamai sisters were floating there while manifesting their angels and astral dress in limited release mode in the sky. It seems Yoshino and the Yamai sisters have hold back the artificial satellite from falling in the nick of time .

“Shidou!”

“Darling!”

The next ones that echoed were Tohka and Miku's voices. Both of them were covered in a pale light dress and Tohka was holding in her hands a sword with the same shape as the Angel Shidou was holding in his hands.

"Tohka…….even Miku too……..!"

Tohka nodded, when Shidou said that in a surprised face.

"Umu, we heard that Shidou and everyone was in danger so, we quickly had them teleport us here. It's good that we made it"

"I see…….how about Kotori and the rest?"

When Shidou asked, Miku was the one who raised her voice this time.

"They are fighting with the enemy ship. Well, I think is alright to leave that to them"

He was convinced after hearing those words. It was probably their fault that <Fraxinus> failed in shooting down the artificial satellite and the transmission got cut just now.

Although he was worried about <Fraxinus> but, he could only believe Kotori and the rest now. He looked back at the girls and slightly lowered his head.

"Sorry……..you saved me. I honestly thought I was going to die "

"What are you saying. Isn't Shidou the one that saved us. We have already received the debt to repay back for something like this"

After Tohka said that, everyone in the surroundings nodded.

"Everyone……"

And when Shidou looked at everyone faces, Yoshino and the Yamai sisters suddenly distorted their faces.

"Ah……..!"

"Kuh, what is with this guy, it suddenly gotten more energetic"

"Resent. I wish it would read the atmosphere"

It seems the custom type <Bandersnatch> combined with the artificial satellite increased the thrusters output. The artificial satellite that was being held back gradually got closer to the ground once again.

When Miku saw that, she spread out both her hands and then crossed both of it In front of her body like that.

"I will……not let that happen!"

After Miku made tracks with her hands, a light keyboard appeared on the spot. Next off behind Miku, a big piano organ-like shape angel was manifested.

"<Gabriel>-----[March]!"

At the same time when she shouted, Miku's thin fingers started dancing fluently on top of the light keyboard. When she did that, a gallant tone echoed throughout-------the wind and ice holding back the artificial satellite got even stronger.

"Amazing…….desu"

"Kuku, this song is the best like I thought. My blood is boiling and body is dancing…..!"

"With all might. Nice assist"

Yoshino and the Yamai sisters bounced their voices. The song controlling Angel <Gabriel> Miku holds. Just by changing the song tone it is performing, it is possible to grant several types of results to the target.

Hearing that song, the people that hears the brave [March] will have their heart and body invigorated and made them able to use their powers, stronger than usual.

Feeling power flowing into his body too, Shidou clenched his fist.

"Okay……if it's like this! Tohka, help me! We are going to destroy that big thing! We can do it if it is the both of us!"

Yes. Right now and right here, Shidou and Tohka, there are 2 < Sandalphon> existing here. If they attacked at the same time then, there is no mistake they can break the enemy's territory.

However, Tohka swung her head with a difficult face.

“No, we can’t”

“Can’t……..? Wh-why can’t we?”

“Mu…….I don’t get it but, Kotori said we can’t. It seems this thing has an explosion art thingy attached to it so, it would activate once it is destroyed. That’s why, we have to break it higher up in the sky”

“-----uh, i- I see…..!”

What she said was true. Thanks to Yoshino, Kaguya and Yuzuru, they managed to kill off the falling speed but, this artificial satellite still has the ability of a pure bomb. If it explodes this close to the ground then, the shelter right below won't stand a chance.

“Th-then what should we----“

Shidou then mumbled that painfully, and the Yamai sisters echoed their voice from the sky.

“Kuku, the reason is very simple. If we can’t destroy it here then, we should just push it back to the sky”

“Consent. That is the only way”

“Wha……can you do that!?”

When Shidou asked that, Kaguya and Yuzuru looked at each other before, *nii* making a smile.

“Ku-Kuku…….who do you think we are. We are the child of the hurricanes which mows down everything, the Yamai’s”

“Undertaking. Leave it to Yuzuru and Kaguya. We will throw away this small luggage”

After saying it with confidence, the both of them nodded.

But, there was faint droplets of sweat oozing down their cheeks, and he could see that they are only putting up a brave act. That’s only normal. The artificial satellite can be easily estimated to be a few tons. What’s more, it was currently having the thrusters propelling downwards. It might still be okay if they use full power but, Kaguya and Yuzuru were still currently in a state where their Reiryoku is being sealed by Shidou. There was no way they could carry it that easily.

However, the Yamai sisters did not make even a simple complain and after making a small nod, both of them spread out both their hands.

“Fuun…….okay, let’s do this Yuzuru”

“Reply. Whenever you are”

At the same time when both of them said that, the wind swirling nearby turned stronger by one layer. The surroundings signboard, road signs, traffic lights and other various things got dragged in while turning it into a giant tornado.

“Uu, ooo, ryahhhhhhhh!”

“With all might. Teiiyaa----“

Both of them then raised both their hands upwards and the artificial satellite bit by bit, but was certainly going up.

“O-ooh…….!”

This might work with this. Shidou felt his fist naturally clenching harder.

But, at that moment. When he thought a small missile-like object flew towards the Yamai sisters from the sky, it then landed on both of their backs and an explosion occurred.

“……..agah!”

“Anguish. Uguhh”

At the same time with the Yamai sisters echoing an anguish sound from the sky, the wind weaken down and the artificial satellite that was heading upwards once again dropped down on the wall of ice.

“Kaguya! Yuzuru!”

After Shidou called out to both of their names, the thick smoke shrouding them was blown off by the wind and the Yamai sisters with a little sooty appearance compared to just now appeared. It seems, even if it is a limited state, since they manifested their Astraldress and was covered with wind in the surroundings, they both end up safe.

"Guh……Who is it! To hinder us like this……..!"

"Inelegant. How annoying"

The Yamai sisters glared up at the sky.

Shidou raised his eyes to chase both of their sights and-----gasped.

"Wha……., that's……!"

Across the sky, countless <Bandersnatch>'s were heading towards Shidou and the girls direction. They does not know the exact number but, it is under around 50 units at the very least by estimation. Each one of them had CR-units equipped in their hands and legs making them prepared for battle.

Thinking back, there was a DEM airship in the sky now. Most likely this <Bandersnatch> team was sent from there.------in order to eliminate Shidou and the girls who were preventing the artificial satellite from crashing.

After the group of <Bandersnatch> was deployed to up, down, left, right directions in the sky, they launched an attack at the

Yamai sisters who were making the artificial satellite rise up, Yoshino who was preventing it from falling, Miku who was amplifying everyone's power with her performance and Shidou and Tohka who were waiting to make a decisive hit to blow up the artificial satellite.

"Kuh-------Be careful, everyone!"

At the same time with Shidou's shout, the <Bandersnatch> group that spread out in the sky shot micro missiles at the same time.

But, since everyone was just barely holding back the falling artificial satellite, they were unable to cope with that. Yoshino with cold air, the Yamai with the wind and Miku with the sound made walls respectively and tried blocking but, they could not completely kill off the impact. One of the explosions induced the surrounding missiles to explode causing it to shake the surrounding atmosphere together with the flames of the explosion.

"Kyaa……!"

"Guee!"

"Dull pain. Ukyuu……."

"Wai-wait! What is thiss!"

Everyone's screams could be heard nearby and the wall of wind and ice stopping the falling artificial satellite started to creak.

"Everyone!"

"Nu…….! Damn you!"

Being the only one who mowed down every missiles heading towards her, Tohka *kii* sharpen her sights before contracting her legs tightly and kicking the ground.

She then advances in the sky in one straight line and one after another, she cut off the <Bandersnatch>'s that attacked Yoshino and the rest.

"Now, Kaguya, Yuzuru! The artificial satellite------Uguh!"

However, the number of the enemies was too many for one person to handle. From the enemy that was approaching in four sides, she was immediately pushed with the launched micro missiles and laser guns as if they were trying to weave that distance.

"Guh……!"

"Tohka! Kuh….."

While shouting-----Shidou leaped backwards. The reason was simple. That's because a <Bandersnatch> came attacking up by swinging its laser blade.

"Why you……..!"

After Shidou inserted strength into his hand which was holding the grip, he then swung <Sandalphon> sideways. The upper half and lower half of the <Bandersnatch> in front of him were

separated beautifully and sparks were scattering about from the severed surface.

However, the true horror of the <Bandersnatch> was its numbers and combinations. It would not care if its allies are down and the dolls, fearless of death would keep on attacking.

"Kuh------"

Shidou continued avoiding the attacks, handling it, and counter back when there is a chance but------his limit immediately arrived.

Of course, there was no way the <Bandersnatch> would not give mercy and pity to him. The expressionless grim reapers did not let this good chance go and headed towards Shidou.

"! Shidou!"

"Darling…….!?"

Tohka and the girls noticed that and raised their voices but, they were currently surrounded by countless <Bandersnatch>'s too. Even if they want to run towards Shidou's side, they were currently in a situation where they can't move.

The <Bandersnatch> stood in front of Shidou and swing up the laser blade.

"Damn it……!"

"Shidou!"

Inside the echoes of Tohka's voice------the <Bandersnatch> swung its sword down accurately at Shidou's eyes.

Part 6

"Ike!"

In the suite room of the imperial hotel located at east Tenbuu, Westcott looked behind at the voice that suddenly called out to him.

Nonetheless, behind Westcott was not the room's entrance but instead there was a giant window showing the Tenguu city's townscape. Thinking normally, there should not be a voice calling out.

But, he immediately knew the situation the moment he looked behind. Wearing a CR-unit and floating in the sky, Ellen was calling to Westcott through the glass she gouged a rectangle out from. Most likely, she hated the labor of entering through the lobby and flew directly to the room.

"Hey, Ellen. It's a wonderful entrance but, it's a little violent though"

When Westcott said that while looking at the beautiful surface of the cut glass, Ellen entered the room through the glass hole she opened.

"Now isn't the time for jokes. Please run away immediately. The rebels in the previous board's meeting are planning to kill you by crashing an artificial satellite"

"Aah, I heard. There was a contact to me too just now"

Westcott raised the side of his lips before giggling.

"I never would have thought Murdoch would have this much execution power and courage. It's an interesting method to use the artificial satellite that was planned for disposal instead of sending an assassin. Iya iya, I might have underestimated him. What a wonderful personal. I have to praise him if I head back to Great Britain"

"……Ike"

Ellen said that as if she was unsatisfied with Westcott's happy manner.

"Anyway, it is dangerous to stay here. I will maintain my Territory while flying as far as possible. Please gather everything you need"

"It's going to be alright here. What, it won't become a big deal"

"……., it's true that if you are with me then, it is possible to restrain the damages with the Territory. But, this is just in case"

"No, before even that, I predict that Murdoch's plan is going to fail"

When Westcott said that, Ellen raised her eyebrows in suspicion .

“What do you mean”

“----here in the Tenguu city, there is Itsuka Shidou’s house and it is the foundation of the Spirits daily life. Also, there is no mistake that the <Ratatoskr> airship is here. If they are the one then, they would probably do something about it. That’s because----------that is the organization that Elliot created”

“……..”

The moment the name Elliot was brought up, he found out that Ellen’s face distorted in unpleasantness.

“I can’t believe this. Are you stopping here just because of that reason?”

“Aah. I can’t?”

“Obviously. Don’t you understand of importance of yourself?”

“Fumu…….”

“Ike”

Ellen said that in a threatening tone. Westcott made a small sigh before slightly raising both his hands.

"I understand. Let's do this then. It's true there is a one in a thousand chance. Murdoch is meticulous. It is thinkable enough for him to have 2 or 3 methods. That's why------"

Towards the direction Ellen was facing towards to----Westcott faced back to the center of the room.

Over there, there was one girl standing there without saying any words from just now.

"Let's dispatch her"

"……., her you say"

"Aah. Don't you think it's a perfect chance to test run <Modred >"

After Westcott said that, he then narrowed his eyes while asking the girl.

"-----I want you to show your power. How about it?"

"……"

The girl didn't say anything as expected and only nodded.

Part 7

"……, ……, …..…"

Natsumi somehow managed to kill off her rough breathing.

*Dokun**Dokun*. Her heart was beating unwantedly fast from just now. Like a titan's footstep, Natsumi's insides to her eardrums were shaking.

It was unnecessary to think for the reason. It was Shidou, and his comrades.

It was good until half-way. It seems Tohka and the girls had already evacuated and Shidou who has been contacted by Kotori, honestly headed to the shelter. Everything was going as what Natsumi had planned.

But, just when she thought Shidou noticed about something and ran out to the city, he started trying to stop the giant artificial satellite.

---And now, a life-threatening predicament was approaching Shidou.

Around the time they were pushing back the artificial satellite to the sky when his comrades came running, countless machine dolls called <Bandersnatch> appeared and started attacking Shidou and the rest.

A <Bandersnatch> raised its sword up at Shidou who was kneeling down. After an instant, once that blade concentrated with Maryoku was swung down, Shidou's body would probably get slice easily. Natsumi recalled back the pain when she got cut by Ellen on her stomach and shivered in reflex.

"A-ah……"

Shidou will definitely die if this goes on. When she thought of that, rather than recalling the wound she got from Ellen, Natsumi felt a vigorous pain in her chest.

It's alright, it's alright, and she kept repeating that in her heart as if to make herself hear it. It will be okay anyway. Even if Natsumi doesn't goes out, Shidou will not die.

Currently, things somehow managed when Shidou got attacked by Ellen in his house, and even though Shidou was about to be crushed by the artificial satellite, Tohka and the rest saved him. Shidou has many trustworthy comrades. It was not a scene where someone like Natsumi should come out after such a long time.

"……it's alright……..someone will save him anyway right……..? Hurry up already……"

While saying that with a soft voice, she waited for someone to save Shidou.

But because Tohka, Yoshino, the Yamai sisters and Miku were being stopped by <Bandersnatch>, they were unable to run over to him. Adding on, speaking of which she realized that they said Kotori and the rest were in a middle of a fight in the skies, from just now.

"Hurry up……someone……someone……"

Although Natsumi distorted her face at her painfully pulsating heart while saying that-------no one appeared. The <Bandersnatch> swung down its sword at Shidou.

“Someone……someone……!”

At that moment, Natsumi finally realized, that there was not a single [someone] existing in this spot.

“Wha……..!?”

Shidou opened his eyes in shock.

In front of Shidou who was unable to move, the <Bandersnatch > swung its blade down and in the instant of the given up life-threatening predicament------

Something in Shidou’s pocket wriggled around.

He thought it was his cell-phone was reaching a call for a moment. But-----it was wrong. The chupa chups Shidou picked up in the underground jumped out from his pocket vigorously and protected Shidou from the <Bandersnatch> attack with its small body.

“Heh……? A ca-candy…….?”

He opened his mouth wide blankly at the unexpected event.

That's only normal. A sphere small enough to be fit inside the palm of Shidou's hands was floating in front of him and was defending the laser blade attack while scattering maryoku light. Getting surprised was probably what this meant.

After the chupa chups flick away the laser blade, it destroyed the <Bandersnatch> head like that before starting to give out a pale glow. That small silhouette then gradually grows bigger.

After a few seconds, a petite girl wearing a witch-like astral dress was there.

"Wha----Natsumi!?"

Shidou shouted unintentionally. Yes, that was the Spirit girl Shidou was running in the city looking for.

It's true that if she was left on the surface then, she would probably be in a position observing Shidou's movements…….he thought of something like that but, he never would have thought she was hiding this nearby him.

"Natsumi, you------"

When Shidou said that, Natsumi remained still, not matching her sights with him and slightly opened her mouth.

"…….ry, up"

"Eh?"

"…….hurry up. You are going to break that big thing right"

After saying that, she used the visor of the hat to hide her face while facing her back at Shidou.

But, that was enough for Shidou. Of course, there was the case about the increase of trustworthy comrades in this predicament. But more than that, no matter what reason it may be for Natsumi who did not open her hearts to Shidou and the group, he was very happy for her to say she wanted to help.

"……ou!"

Shidou made a strong nod, and put in strength to the hand holding <Sandalphon>.

But------

"Kyaaaa!"

At that moment, when he thought he heard Miku's scream coming from behind, the brave march song flowing nearby was suddenly cut.

It seems, she was unable to continue performing due to the <Bandersnatch>'s attack. Miku jumped behind and started attacking the group of <Bandersnatch> with her [Voice].

At the same time with the performance being cut off and her doing that, cracks entered in the ice wall that was barely holding back the artificial satellite and it started collapsing. And at exact timing with that, the wind swirling around also lost its energy.

"Wha…….!?"

The Yamai sisters and Yoshino's Reiryoku which was increased because of Miku's performance was probably unable to circulate into preserving the wall. With its shackle lost, the artificial satellite once again accelerated and started falling towards the ground.

"Shidou!"

At that moment, after shaking off the <Bandersnatch> in the sky , Tohka descended towards Shidou and Natsumi's side.

"Are you okay, Shidou!"

"A-aah……I am okay. More importantly----"

When Shidou looked up at the falling artificial satellite, Tohka nodded in horror.

"Umu……but, what should we do!? If we destroy it here then , a giant explosion will occur here right!?"

"…….fuun"

After Tohka said that in panic, Natsumi snorted.

"……anyway, just break that thing already. Don't you two have that amazing sword"

"No, that thing has something called explosion arts on it------"

"Fuun"

Just when Shidou said that, Natsumi snorted unhappily again.

She then thrust her hand forward and shouted.

"-----<Haniel>!"

When she did that, a broom-like Angel appeared in her hand and when he thought the tip of it opened up, a blinding light wrapped the surroundings.

"Uwah……!?"

"Nu!"

Shidou and Tohka covered their eyes reflexively in an instant.

Next, the moment they opened their eyes.

"Wha……."

Shidou looked up at the sky, and opened his eyes in surprise, contrastively different from just now.

That was only normal. That's because, the artificial satellite that has reached until a few hundred meters off the ground was transformed into a giant fat round Mr. Pig mascot.

It was unmistakably <Haniel>'s transformation ability. Shidou immediately looked at Natsumi.

In mid-October. He recalled back the time he first met Natsumi. During that time, Natsumi changed the appearance of the AST members into mascots and the approaching missiles into carrots just like right now.

And even when those carrot missiles landed on the floor, only comical-like explosion from mangas occurred.

Of course, it would turn out the same way since the difference between its original power and size is too different but, maybe with this------!

"Come on, hurry up……..!"

Natsumi said that irritated. There was still a giant pig approaching Tenguu city. The ability of it being a bomb has dropped drastically but, if something that size falls down then, a tremendous impact will probably occur.

But, it does not change the fact that it became possible to destroy the target in the spot with this. After Shidou express his thanks to Natsumi, he brought his sights towards Tohka.

"Let's do this, Tohka!"

"Umu! Ready when you are!"

After Shidou and Tohka nodded at each other, both of them prepared <Sandalphon> at the target at the same time.

Originally, this angel was the only one in existence. It was [A miracle that holds a shape] that definitely has nothing that can oppose it.

With that miracle, Shidou and Tohka swung it down at the same time.

"Uooooooooooooou!"

"Haaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!"

The shining sword strike released by Shidou and Tohka, made a cross in the sky and exploded at the target.

However, maybe since it still has its <Bandersnatch> ability even though it has its shape changed, it put up a territory to defend against the attack made from both of them.

"Guh…….!"

It was still an angel attack. There was no way the <Bandersnatch> territory would defend against it easily. But, not only is Tohka also quite exhausted from fighting the <Bandersnatch>s; being not the true user of the angel-----Shidou's

body was reaching its limit because of frequent force usage. The strike barely broke through the territory and was approaching the giant pig as if it was leaning forward to it.

“Kuh------!”

A little more. It was seriously a little bit more. However, he could not fill in that little bit no matter what he does.

Whether it’s Yoshino or Kaguya or Yuzuru or Miku. If one of them could provide assistance then it could probably be destroyed but-------Yoshino and the others were still being blocked by the < Bandersnatch> and could not move.

“If, this, goes on------“

Shidou made an anguished expression and was about to fall on his knees.

“<Haniel>!”

Natsumi raised the angel she was holding in her right hand and shouted once more.

It can’t be because she saw Shidou and Tohka unable to destroy this Mr. Pig that she planned to transform it into something else. No------ she would do that in the beginning if that was possible. Then what is she…….

When Shidou thought about that, Natsumi then continued raising her voice.

"------[Kaleidoscope]"

In an instant.

A change appeared on the broom Angel that Natsumi was hanging out.

The broom's whole body was covered with a mysterious color like a polished mirror and the broom itself transformed its silhouette like clay. Moments later.

"Huh……..!?"

Shidou opened his eyes wide in surprise when he saw ***that*** in Natsumi's hand.

It was a [sword].

It has a blade with the width just around Natsumi's body. It has a glowing gold guard and black grip. Yes-----

---The Angel <Sandalphon> manifested there.

"What are you doing to Shidou……! The only one that can mess with him is----------only meeeeeeeeeeeeee!"

After Natsumi shouted, she then swung as hard as possible at the Mr. Pig with <Sandalphon>.

“<Sandalphon>…….!”

When she did that, the blade was overflowing with light and Natsumi performed a sword strike at the target as if she was following swordsmanship.

It was not only the shape. Although it is inferior to Tohka’s, it unmistakably has the same powers as the real <Sandalphon>.

Shidou, Tohka and also----Natsumi.

The <Sandalphon> sword strike from 3 of them, bathed the target's territory.

The invisible wall put up around the Mr. Pig, made sounds as if it was cracking-----and gradually get smashed up.

Once it loses its Territory, there will be nothing left to protect the mascot which only has its giant size. Thanks to the remains of the sword strike that broke through the territory, Mr. Pig made a comical sound like the ones from Mangas and burst------countless chupa chups then poured down nearby like rain.

Part 8

"Shidou…….san!"

"Kuku, you did it"

"Consent. Magnificent"

"Aah, darling was so cool--"

After succeeding in destroying the artificial satellite. Having defeating all the <Bandersnatch>, Yoshino, Kaguya, Yuzuru and Miku went over to Shidou and the others side. It seems everyone got light injuries but, they seem to be alright.

After Shidou took a sigh of relief about that fact for now, he then deeply lowered his heads towards everyone.

"Everyone……..thank you. If it was only me……..I could not have saved everyone from the city. Really, thank you all very much"

When Shidou said that, the girls lined up there swung their heads uniformly.

"I told you already Shidou. All of us wanted to help you"

"I also, like……..this city so"

"Ufufu, that's about it. Well, just let us help this much"

"Fuu……..well, it was thanks to you in the first place or else we won't be here now"

"Agree. Even this much isn't enough to repay you back"

"That's right you know. Rather, I would be so happy until the level of writing a new song, just by being relied on by darling"

After saying that, everyone *nii* smiled. Shidou scratched his cheeks while making a wry smile and-----said [Thank you] once more.

But, inside there, there was only one person not saying anything and was about to leave the place.-----it's Natsumi.

"Natsumi!"

"……..!"

When Shidou called her, Natsumi made a big twitch with her shoulders and stopped on the spot.

She then slowly looked over to Shidou and the girls, and *fuun* snorted in a manner as if she was a little afraid.

"…….wha-what is it. Are you saying I should come out faster rather than that moment? Or maybe, are you saying it's disgusting for me to transform as a candy and hide in your pocket…….?"

Again in a negative manner, she said that. After Shidou made a wry smile at that unchanging manner, he *fuu* made a sigh.

"------Glad you're safe"

"Eh……"

When Shidou said that, Natsumi opened her eyes wide and stood still on the spot.

"Wh-what…….are you saying. I……..hide as I pleased…… ……..and still cause trouble to you……."

While saying that with difficulty, Natsumi's body started to tremble a little.

"Before even that……I did a lot of bad things to you all…….. but even so, why, why……."

Gradually, her voice started to have sobs mixed into it. Large drops of tears started to fall from her emerald eyes and her voice gradually got louder.

"What……just what is with you all, every one of you……! Aren't you all stupid, aren't you all stupid…….!? I don't get it…..! Why, why would you all go……..!"

The last part of the sentence was no longer words anymore. Road of tears formed on her cheeks and she started to cry loudly.

"U-ue……,ku, uaa,aaaaaaaaaaaaa, uaaaaaaah-----"

"O-oi, Natsumi……"

Shidou did not think she would cry. Not knowing what to do, he moved his hands hastily to try to calm her down. Maybe they realized the weird situation, Tohka and the girls started to try and stop Natsumi from crying too.

But, Natsumi did not stop crying and---------continued, echoing her tear filled voice.

"So…….sorry……..I did so many bad things…….. cause trouble for everyone……sorry……even though everyone was nice to me……..I am sorry for saying only bad things……..."

Even though she was making hiccups, Natsumi did not stop her words. She continued on as if to release all of the pent up emotions she accumulated in her heart until now in one go.

"When you all gave me a massage……I was happy……. when you all cut my hair……I was happy……., when you all chose clothes for me…….I was happy……..., when you all put make-up on me……I was happy……uh, when everyone told me I was cute……I was happy……..!"

She then slurp up the running mucus from her noise-----

"Even……..when I was that happy…….I did not say it at that time……sorry……."

Natsumi looked at Shidou's eyes with bloodshot eyes.

"…….Thank……you"

After Shidou opened his eyes wide, he looked at Tohka and the others faces. Tohka and the rest also made the same faces.

But, they immediately relaxed their mouth and faced Natsumi.

"Don't worry about it. We are thankful too. Without you, I have no idea what would happen to everyone by now"

"…….also, you don't have to bother about it. I was the one that got taken care off anyway"

"I see"

After Shidou said that, he made a soft sigh before putting out his right hand to Natsumi.

"Errr…….well, about that. I promised you that you can go anywhere you like once everything is over so, even though I can't stop you anymore, if it is okay with you……."

After saying that, Shidou this time stared at Natsumi's eyes.

"-----Can we……..become friends?"

"……..uh"

Natsumi gasped in shock and looked at Shidou, Tohka and the others in turns.

After that, slowly-----in a timid manner, Natsumi grabbed Shidou's hand before, nodding.

"U……u…….u……uaaaaaaaaaaaaa, uaaaaaaaaaaaaaa"

Once again, large drops of tears flowed down her eyes and she started to cry.

"Aaah--, oh darling, you made Natsumi-chan cry again--"

"Hu-huuh!?"

Miku said that while teasing him. Shidou twitched his shoulders.

"I can't leave Natsumi-chan to someone like that. So with that, Natsumi-chan lets become friends too—"

"Mu! Shidou, don't bully Natsumi. Let's be friends too!"

"A-ah-no……..err……..m-me too……."

"Yoshinon too---! Yoshinon too---!"

"Kuku, it's dangerous to leave your body to Shidou. Alright, Natsumi. I specially allow you to be my kinsman"

"Consent. Who knows what kind of perverted plays Shidou would force onto you. Yuzuru and the others will protect you properly.

And, continuing right after Miku, everyone started to gather around Natsumi too. Shidou could not stand it anymore and raised his voice.

"O-oi, you girls! Don't say things that could make misunderstandings about me!"

After Shidou shouted, everyone started to laugh.

He then looked over to Natsumi-----and although there were still tears left on Natsumi's cheeks, Shidou made an expression as if he saw something the first time.

That's------a very cute smile.

Friend Or Enemy

Epilogue: DEM's Wizard

Part 1

---It has been around 30 minutes since they finished shooting down the artificial satellite safely.

After having a battle with a DEM airship in the Tenguu city skies, Kotori contacted them and although the enemy ship has ran away, she told that the <Fraxinus> only received some damage.

But, it seems they temporarily can't use the teleporter so, Shidou and the girls were walking to the foresaid underground facility before the residents that evacuated are released outside.

Having received damage to his body because of using an angel, Shidou took some rest until he recovered enough to walk. Well, Tohka who was still worried about Shidou suggested [I will carry you!] to him and although there was no one to see them, it was still embarrassing so he refused politely.

In the end, Natsumi------decided to go to <Ratatoskr> with Shidou and the rest.

Of course, her Reiryoku was still not sealed and she has not received the explanation about it. It was easy to imagine Natsumi not liking the fact of losing her transformation ability which she can use like it's natural.

But-------if he took the time to explain to her, Natsumi would probably understand. Shidou looked over to Natsumi who was walking beside him.

"……"

"Wha-what…….?"

Natsumi said that in bewilderment. But in that expression, he could not see the harsh look that he saw before last time. Shidou made a smile while swinging his head.

"No, nothing"

"…….ah, I see"

After Natsumi said that absentmindedly, she *pui* averted her sights.

But, after a while. This time from Natsumi, she talked to Shidou using a voice soft enough to avoid Tohka and the girls in front of them from hearing her.

"……Ahno, err"

"Hnn, what's wrong Natsumi"

"I just……want to ask a little something, can I?"

"Aah, what is it?"

When Shidou replied, Natsumi silently pulled Shidou's sleeves.

"Wai-wait a second, what happened all of a sudden"

"It's okay, come here a bit"

After Natsumi pulled Shidou, she then pulled him and entered a corner. She then looked at Shidou's face while asking with a meek expression.

"…….hey, Shidou"

"Wha-what?"

After Shidou got nervous at the strange situation, Natsumi gulped down her saliva while continuing on.

"Am I…….really, cute?"

"Eh?"

Shidou opened his eyes wide at the unexpected question.

But, thinking back carefully, it was almost the same question she asked during the first time Shidou met Natsumi. Well of course, Natsumi was in an adult onee-san appearance at that time.

Shidou immediately smiled broadly and made a big nod.

"Aah…….of course. ----you're cute, Natsumi"

"…….!"

Natsumi's face turned red and she opened her eyes wide before, mumbling something and continuing the rest.

"……next time"

"Next time?"

"Ahno…….make-up…….will you teach me……?"

Natsumi casted her face downwards in embarrassment while saying awkwardly. Shidou also made an exaggerated nod.

"Aah, okay. If it's you, you'll probably remember it immediately"

"……I see"

When Shidou answered her, Natsumi made a small nod as if she was satisfied with something.

And then-----

"Eh?"

Shidou let out a hysteric voice. But that was only something normal. That's because, Natsumi suddenly extended out her hand and pulled Shidou's neck just like that and-----

Chuu their lips touched each other.

"……!? ……..!?"

It's true that, he was going to explain the situation to Natsumi sooner or later and tell her that they have to kiss to seal her Reiryoku. But, since it was too sudden, he could not make any preparations in his heart. His eyes were about to dart out.

In an instant, a warm feeling flowing into his body was born and----at the same time with that, the witch astral dress Natsumi was wearing disappear together with the light.

"Wah…….!? Wha-what is this……."

Natsumi's face was covered with bewilderment and she covered her chest with her arms while crouching down on the spot .

"I-I didn't know this. The Astral dress would disappear after the Reiryoku is sealed……."

Natsumi's face was beet red while she mumbled that. Shidou hastily moved his hands while opening his mouth in panic.

"A-aah, it seems the astral dress is something made out of Reiryoku so……wait, Natsumi? Why do you know about sealing the Reiryoku-----"

"Aaah!"

Around the time Shidou was saying that, he could hear Tohka's voice coming from behind. It seems they retraced their steps, since

they could not see Shidou and Natsumi walking behind them. Of course Tohka wasn't the only one, Yoshino, the Yamai sisters and Miku were also there.

"Shidou! What are you doing in a place like this!"

"……! A-ahno…..I, am not looking so……."

"Kuku, to perform the seal in the middle of the city like this, what an admirable fetish"

"Consent. Your greed to use the unusual space of an empty city for your play is as one would expect"

"Kyaaa--! Darling is so daring!"

Etc etc, they started making a commotion.

"Wai-wait a second! I wasn't the one-----"

Although Shidou tried to make an excuse, Tohka and the girls did not have the ears to hear.

Part 2

"We failed……you say!?"

Inside the meeting room of the DEM industry British HQ, Murdoch raised a voice like a scream at the news that he just received.

At the same time, the faces of every board directors lined up there turned pale.

But that was normal. ------Isaac Westcott's assassination was a failure. This would mean that, the hostility and malice directed to him will be repaid accordingly-----no, several times more than what was dealt to their bodies.

"Wha-what do you mean by this, Murdoch! I joined in this plan because y-you said this is for certain!?"

"That's right! What are you going to do about this!?"

"I-I don't know about this! This is all Murdoch's rampage!"

The males in their primes all raised shouts pathetically while slamming the table. It was a very funny state but, the current Murdoch doesn't have pleasure to laugh at that.

The mastermind of this plan was Murdoch. That is a fact that cannot be overturned. If this enters Westcott's ears then, it would expose Westcott's malice towards Murdoch-----no, to everyone related to him.

"……."

But, it's not like everything is over. Murdoch pulled the mike placed on the table and let out his voice towards the bridge of the giant airship <Heptameron> that was dispatched to Tenguu city.

"Not yet…….things are not done yet. Captain, is < Heptameron> safe!?"

"Yes…….! We had a battle with <Ratatoskr>'s ship but, our ship only suffered less than 10% of damage"

"Then------The last <Humpty Dumpty> is still there right!?"

The board directors lined up in the room twitched their eyebrows at Murdoch's words.

Yes. For this operation, the cautious Murdoch prepared 3 < Humpty dumpty>.

First was a bait to bring out <Ratatoskr> airship out, the [First Egg].

The other one is the real one that is going to accurately stop Westcott's life, the [Second Egg].

And-----the last one.

By any chance the first two <Humpty dumpty> ended with misfires, the last unit------[Third Egg] was prepared but it was equipped onto the <Heptameron>. Of course, unless it is equipped onto the artificial satellite, it will not fall down from the satellite orbit. The power compared to the [First] and [Second] is very far apart.

But even so, if it is able to accurately explode right on top of Westcott then, the shelter should get blown to bits together with him using only the explosion arts installed on it.

"Where is Westcott MD's current position!?"

"Right now……., uh, it seems he is still inside his hotel room"

"What did you say…….!?"

Murdoch distorted his face-------***are you saying you're not going to run to the underground shelter in this situation.***

An extraordinary amount of frustration ran through his body. Murdoch felt that that man was making a scornful laugh at the plan, he poured in his soul and blood for.

But, it doesn't change the fact that this was favorable. If he did not evacuate to the shelter then it would mean that it is possible for the power of the [Third Egg] to be more than enough to take him down. Murdoch made an order towards the mike.

"-----Do it. I don't care how much of the city you destroy. Get Westcott's head!"

Part 3

"……..!?"

Having lent his jacket to Natsumi who was half-naked because of the seal and once again headed towards the underground facility, Shidou suddenly pressed his ears and raised his eyebrows.

The reason is simple. A very loud alarm rang and echoed from the Incam he was wearing on his ear.

"Wha-what's wrong, Kotori"

When Shidou asked, he could hear Kotori's panicked voice coming from the Incam immeadiately.

"Maryoku readings are being picked up in the sky…….! This is-------an explosion art reading coming from the airship that ran away just now……..!?"

"What did you say…….!?"

Shidou gasped and looked up the sky.

"Mu……? What's happened, Shidou"

Maybe they felt something strange at that weird state, Tohka and the girls tilted their head. Shidou opened his mouth without releasing his sights from the sky.

"Aah……it seems, it's still not over yet. She said there is another bomb like the one from just now is going to fall again"

"Wha…….!"

When Shidou said that, everyone's face was filled with nervousness all at once. And just like Shidou, they looked up to the sky to once again shoot down the incarnation of hostility that was falling down.

But Natsumi, who just had her Main Transformation Reiryoku Sealed, and with everyone else having used up all their powers, Intercepting the falling target like just now is going to be hard with the current condition at the very least.

However…… he has to do it. Shidou calmed his heart down like just now and concentrate his mentality onto his right hand.

But-------before he could manifest <Sandalphon>, a tremendous pain ran through his whole body and he fell onto his knees on the spot by reflex.

"Guah……."

"Shidou"

Tohka ran over to him, worried. But, there was no way the enemy would consider carefully Shidou's condition. Another alarm could be heard again from the Incam immediately.

"Commander! An explosion arts equipped type < Bandersnatch> was thrown off from the airship!"

"What about an intercept from <Fraxinus>!?"

"It is impossible in the current position!"

“Kuh-----Maximum speed! No matter what, before it falls to the ground we have to-----“

And.

In the middle of Kotori’s command reaching Shidou’s eardrums .

In an instant, he saw a line of light in the sky before a huge explosion occurred in the skies of Tenguu city-----the surrounding atmosphere trembled.

“Wha……..!?”

After Shidou and the Spirits opened their eyes wide, he could hear the crew’s voice from the Incam.

“The readings-----disappeared!”

“What did you say? Did it self-destruct?”

“I-I don’t know, but before the explosion, there is heat source-----“

Heat source. That word caused Shidou to recall back the line of light that he saw just now. Impossible, did someone just sniped the thrown off bomb.

It's true that he can comprehend it, if he thought like that. But, something like making the same type of bomb that took Shidou and the others to join their powers to explode with just one hit is------

"……!"

At that moment, Shidou moved his sights left and right.

Towards the line of light he got attracted to before the explosion occurred. Towards the direction of that origin, he saw a small shadow there.

"That's------"

That shadow slowly looked over to Shidou and the girls before stopping in the sky.

It was a wizard wearing a CR-unit. It was something not from AST. She was wearing a wiring suit with the same design as Ellen's, thrusters with a special shape, and also, the Giant Maryoku Cannon she was holding was very impressive.

"Wha-------"

Looking at that appearance, Shidou opened his eyes in shock.

It's not like he was not surprised by the fact that a DEM wizard attacked a DEM bomb. The power that took one hit to destroy the bomb deserved to be shocked when it took several spirits to destroy it even though they were in sealed condition.

But-------the one that stole Shidou's eyes was a much simple matter.

He was familiar with that Wizard's face.

"Ori-gami…..?"

When Shidou called that name, the Wizard------Origami silently send her sights towards Shidou and the girls.

With her normal----no,

Even more than normal; with her eyes which he could not read any emotions from.

Afterword

Long time no see, this is Tachibana Koushi.

I hereby present you [Date A Live 9 Natsumi search]. How did you like it. I would be happy if you take a liking to it.

The front cover is of course Natsumi (Real). The onee-san version on Volume 8 was wonderful but, the real version this time is also wonderful. I think the combination of messy hair and an unhappy face is the best (This is an impression from someone, and there are individual difference in the perception for it). Since I like characters slanting towards negativity very much, I had fun writing this.

Speaking of the design cover, opposite to the emerald attached to the hat of Natsumi (Adult), the hat for Natsumi (Real) also had that attached but, the unpolished ore was quite interesting. Compared to Kotori's frontispiece, I could not even come close to use the jacket that way. Tsunako-san is seriously amazing to put in such a smart design in the image we told her about.

But even so, its volume 9, volume 9 you know. It;s an unknown territory for me who had Volume 8 finished since the debut work.

What's more, Date is planned to keep on continuing so, the release of volume 10 is decided. It's a double digit unit. The license for my light novel is limited to AT so, i was supposed to write until volume 9, I wonder if this is going to be okay. if I was correct, I heard that when I need to continue over volume 10 unlicensed, I need to pay an offering of sweet candy to the god of light novel (Blonde twin tsundere). If I were to write more that volume 10 without doing that, then the god of light novel (Blonde twin tsundere) would intrude night after night and *Puku* while puffing her cheeks, she would poke the sides and say [Hey what's the big idea for writing volume 10 without my permission!] Aah like I thought, I think I should write volume 10 while remaining unlicensed.

Alright, it is about the comic version of [Date A Live] that has been announced before but, starting from (26th November release) it has finally start its serialization! In the first chapter, the cover page & character opening page & increased pages is presented! Please enjoy the new [Date A Live] drawn by Inui Sekihoko-san!

Since the progress for the second season for the anime is doing well, please stay tune for that! The design for that and this was amazing. Ehehehe.

This time too, it is thanks to Tsunako-san, supervisor-san, design-sans, and many people related to distributing the publication that the book could be released. I am really thankful.

The next [Date A Live 10], it is finally planned for that character to be on the front page design. It is planned for the story to move a little so, i hope it is able to meet expectations.

Well then, I pray for us to meet again in the next volume.

10 October 2013 Tachibana Koushi.

Translation Notes and References

Chapter 6:

1. ↑ Referring to when children helps their parents in the household.
2. ↑ Kiss
3. ↑ Imagine power rangers
4. ↑ Refering to teenagers with a tone used to talk to children

Chapter 7:

1. ↑ Mana

Chapter 8:

1. ↑ It's something like putting an image in the entire homepage, basically a social harassment in the internet

Chapter 10:

1. ↑ A kind of youkai that appears in the Japanese folklore and has two long horns growing out from its head